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"BRITISH POLICY AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT, 1895-1912"

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ABSTRACT

This thesis traces British reactions to the development of the Chinese revolutionary movement from its beginnings in the British colony of Hong Kong, to the involvement of returned students in the Yangtze ports, the outbreak of the Revolution in October 1911, and finally studies Britain's role in the negotiations between the government and the revolutionaries leading to the peaceful establishment of the Chinese Republic. British policy in China was influenced variously by the China merchants, the missionaries and most important of all, by members of the Diplomatic and Consular Services in China, who were the only reliable sources of information emanating from a country geographically and culturally remote from Great Britain. In practical terms there was really no definite policy towards the Chinese revolutionary movement: Britain was caught in the dilemma between desire for conditions of peace and stability to enable her to carry on her main business in China, namely trade and commerce, and the hopes among many in the late Victorian period to see the Chinese undertake radical reforms in all aspects of their government and administration. This resulted in Britain's official stand of absolute neutrality and non-intervention when the Revolution finally erupted, while unofficially the British Legation in Peking was given free rein to influence the course of events in China by mediation and indirect pressure, to expedite the return to normalcy after the chaos of the Revolution. Policy-making in China was thus in the hands of those experts on the scene upon whose personal attitudes and idiosyncracies regarding reform and revolution in China statesmen in Britain depended.

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CHAPTER I

BRITAIN AND CHINA, POLICIES AND PERSONALITIES, 1895-1912

British foreign policy in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods was concerned with a series of important international issues. The growth of German strength, Russia's territorial ambitions in Asia, the astonishing transformation of Japan into a modern power and the appearance of United States influence in the Carribean and Central America were all developments which affected British policy; in Africa an international scramble for territory and the Boer Wars diverted British attention to that part of the world for at least three years, 1899-1902.

The basic problem which dominated British foreign policy thinking at this time was the general security of the Empire in a world where the balance of power, both political and economic was fast changing.[1] It was necessity rather than choice which ended the era of "Splendid Isolation" in Britain's foreign relations.[2] The Far Eastern situation following Japan's defeat of China in 1895, and the "Scramble for Concessions" in 1898-99 dwelt the first blow to the viability of isolation as a policy, and the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902 marked the re-emergence of Britain as a participant

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[1] See Great Britain, Central Office of Information, Reference Division, British Foreign Policy, a Brief Collection of Fact and Quotations (London 1961) 2-19 for a summary of Britain's foreign interests of this period.

[2] In May 1901, Salisbury expressed to Lansdowne his thoughts on isolation as a policy. "Except during(Napoleon I's reign) we have never even been in danger and therefore, it is impossible for us to judge whether the 'isolation' under which we are supposed to suffer, does or does not contain in it any element of peril. It would hardly be wise to incur novel and most onerous obligations, in order to guard against a danger in whose existence we have no historical reason for believing." Quoted in Lord William Strang, Britain in World Affairs (London 1961) 249-50. It was not quite true, of course, that England had been in no danger. See also C. Howard, Splendid isolation (London 1967) 14-25.

in international politics.[3] In this scheme of foreign policy principles and aims, China was therefore only one aspect, and probably not the most important in her eyes, of Britain's interests in the period 1895-1912.

British policy in China had always been coloured by economic considerations. Because Britain enjoyed the largest share of China's foreign trade, any break-up of the Chinese Empire could only be a change for the worse. It thus became Britain's aim to uphold China's territorial integrity and sovereignty as far as possible, and the principles of such a policy became identified with the catch-words "Chinese integrity" and the "Open door". Russia, of course, was viewed as the supreme menace to the furtherance of British trade and commerce. To frustrate Russian ambitions Britain was prepared at various times to bolster a weak Chinese regime or to lay claim to Chinese rights and territories, all in the interests of preserving "Chinese integrity" and the "Open door."[4] By the twentieth century, through the acquisition of treaty ports, a colony (Hong Kong), leased territories (Wei-hai-wei and the New Territories), spheres of influence (in the Yangtze), railway, mining and other industrial concessions, Britain had built what was termed an "imperium in imperio" in China.[5] The maintenance of such a complex structure led inevitably to

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[3] G. Monger, The End of Isolation (London 1963) 250-1; see also I. Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance (London 1966) D. C. Watt, Personalities and Policies, Studies in the Formation of British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century (Notre Dame 1965) 228-9 supplies a review of public reaction to the signing of the Alliance.

[4] British policy in China is discussed in Sir F. Whyte, China and the Foreign Powers (New York 1928) 36-9; G. E. Hubbard, British Far Eastern Policy (London 1939) 3-5; M.R.D. Foot, British Foreign Policy Since 1898 (London 1956) 19-20; E. Luard, Britain and China (London 1962) 36-7; W. Strang, op.cit. 252 suggests that the fear of Russia was somewhat exaggerated.

[5] Grey used the term, in Grey to Jordan, 31 Aug. 1906 (confidential) FO 371/35. See also R. T. Barrett, "Britain's Responsibility in South China" in Asiatic Review, 34 (1938) 147-9.

Britain being gradually drawn into China's internal affairs. To secure the necessary conditions for improved trade and commerce, Britain could not ignore the inadequacies of the late Ch'ing reign in China, and the need for reform and modernization in all aspects of her administration. Thus partly out of self-interest, and partly from high moral principles,[6] Great Britain unwittingly became involved in the reform and revolutionary movements in China in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Yet it must be recognised that among Britons even at the best of times, knowledge of and interest in China's affairs was limited. China was never fully part of the British experience in Asia (as India was), not known geographically or culturally. Few of the British ruling class ever travelled to China, and it was only a handful among the higher officals at the Foreign Office who had any responsibility in connection with China. Public opinion, such as existed in late Victorian England, still ascribed all matters of foreign policy to those in office, content to remain in ignorant bliss of all foreign affairs.[7] Nevertheless there were still some who for different reasons entertained a special interest in China, and in time they exerted an important influence over the conduct of British policy in China.

The China merchants constituted the most consistent source of pressure on the British government for action in China. They claimed superiority in Chinese affairs over Downing Street, although their residence in China in the cramped surroundings of concessions and treaty ports, which many regarded as civilized islands in a hostile, barbarian and frightening land, produced in

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[6]The late Victorians were particularly identified with a crusading spirit in their imperialistic endeavours overseas. See an excellent treatment of the subject, R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians (London 1965) 1-26. See also P. T. Moon, Imperialism and World Politics (New York 1926) 58-67.

[7]See A. J. P. Taylor, The Trouble-Makers, Dissent over Foreign Policy (London 1957) 95-6; Donald Bishop, The Administration of British Foreign Relations, (Seattle, Wash. 1967) 183-4, 192-3; R. Postgate and A. Vallance, England Goes to Press (New York 1937) 183.

them a "fortress mentality"[8] which certainly did not qualify them as the best advisors available to the British Foreign Office. The China Association, for instance, organized since 1889 for the promotion of trade in China, contributed much towards the advancement of British concerns in the Far East. Yet as the problems of China became involved in the complexities of world politics by the end of the 19th century, the influence of vested mercantile interests usually more local than national in outlook, was a stumbling block rather than an advantage to British policy.[9] The same could also be said of the missionaries, whose enjoyment of extraterritorial rights in China, and eagerness to create spheres of British Protestant influence in the Chinese Empire, were often occasions for friction in the diplomatic relations between China and Great Britain.[10]

When it came to influencing the general public in connection with affairs in China however, neither the merchants nor the missionaries came close to the power the press exerted, in an age when literacy was widespread and Parliament was no longer the direct and only sounding board of the nation.

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[8] N. Cantlie and G. Seaver, Sir James Cantlie (London 1939) 114-5. During the years when the Chinese revolutionary movement intensified its activities against the Dynasty we thus see the merchants generally hostile to Southern China (from whence came most of the revolutionaries) and friendly to the North, since the former urged disorder and rebellion while the latter promised peace and stability.

[9] See N. A. Pelcovits, Old China Hands and the Foreign Office (New York 1948) Preface; J. O. P. Bland, Recent Events and Present Policies in China (Philadelphia 1912) 264-5.

[10] A recent work on this is by Edmund S. Wehrle, Britain, China and the Antimissionary Riots 1891-1900 (Minneapolis 1966) 3-18; see also L. R. Marchant, A Guide to the Archives and Records of Protestant Christian Missions from the British Isles to China 1796-1914 (Australia 1966) 4-5; A. J. Garnier, in No Speedier Way, Golden Jubilee of Christian Literature Society for China, 1887-1938 (Shanghai 1938) 4, suggests that had the missionaries been given larger resources and allowed to do more, the Chinese Revolution of 1911 could even have been averted.

The two leading papers in this field were the London Times and the North China Daily News, with its weekly edition the North China Herald, published in Shanghai. The Times has always held a special relationship to the government,[11] and this was also true of its work in China, mainly because of the personality of its correspondent in Peking, Dr. George E. Morrison (1897-1912).[12] Morrison was genuinely devoted to China and the Chinese people, and though his methods were sometimes questionable, he was an ardent advocate of reform in China. Thus he often found himself acting as mediator between the Chinese reformers and revolutionaries and the British government in London, from whom the Chinese innovators sought support.[13] While always cooperative and available to his many Chinese friends, Morrison did not get on well with his own government officials in China and London. His eagerness and talent for extracting information occasionally resulted in the Times publishing news before the Legation or Foreign Office was aware of the developments, though seldom with any serious consequences.[14] The North China Herald also advocated reform in China,

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[11] D. Bishop, op.cit. 200

[12] Dates in parentheses throughout this chapter refer to terms of office.

[13] In August and September, 1909, Morrison wrote a series of twelve articles on conditions in China and the need for foreign help in the Chinese reform movement. See the Times, Aug.- Sept. 1909.

[14] For example, in March 1898, the House of Commons demanded to know from the Foreign Office a reason for the Times being so rapid with their China news, and Curzon (Undersecretary for Parliamentary Affairs) explained that it was the journalists' "intelligent anticipation of facts even before they occur" which led to the "unequal competition." See Hansard LV, 29 Mar 1898, 1244-5. The Times' editor defended Morrison against the charge: "Events themselves have shown that in another sense from that intended by the author, the gibe conveyed a well-merited compliment which unhappily cannot be reciprocated to the Department, at least in the Far East ..." Times, 12 Sept. 1900, P. 7, col. 2-3, editorial. In his diary, Morrison wrote, "I never did, as was implied in the papers, forestall the government. Always I told Sir Claude MacDonald (British Minister) anything important I happened to hear. The difference was he did not believe things which I credited." C. Pearl, Morrison of Peking (Australia 1967) 102. Morrison maintained a wide circle

but being the mouthpiece of the Shanghai mercantile community, its policies arose less from any feeling for the advancement of the Chinese than from the desire for better conditions of trade.[15] The North China Herald thus stood foremost for peace and order, and tended to regard with disfavour the potentially anarchical activities of the Chinese revolutionaries.

Within the British government structure, the Far Eastern Department (comprising then (of) China, Japan and Korea) was only one of nine other divisions of the Foreign Office. In late Victorian England the connection between public opinion and public policy was slighter in foreign affairs than in any other sphere of politics. Control of the Foreign Office was always in the hands of a professional staff and drawn perennially from upper class families, whose sympathies were naturally remote from those of the general public. Members of Parliament and the Cabinet were politicians who rarely entertained any intimate knowledge of foreign relations. Accordingly the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was usually subjected to less criticism and control over his work than any other Minister of the period.[16] In the actual conduct of British foreign affairs individuals thus counted for more than institutions.

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of friends among the Chinese population in and out of Peking, and it was no wonder that by mingling with the natives he was often given information which was otherwise denied the Legation officials. See Chen Chih-mai, "Two Australian Friends of China" in Free China Review, X (June 1960) 16-20; L. James, "Morrison of Peking" in The Nineteenth Century and After, Vol. 88 (1920) 164-70.

[15] N. Britton, The Chinese Periodical Press (Shanghai 1933) 49.

[16] Robert T. Nightingale, "The Personnel of the British Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service, 1851-1929" in The Realist, II, 3 (1929) 328-30; H. K. Norton, Foreign Office Organization (Philadelphia 1929) 9-11; in A. W. Ward and G. P. Gooch (eds) The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy 1783-1919 (New York 1922-3) III, 540, the Foreign Office is described by a witty undergraduate: "the last choice preserve of administration practised as a sport ..." D. Bishop, op.cit. Chap. 9-10 has a clear and comprehensive account of the Foreign Office in the past and at present.

Lord Salisbury for over ten years between 1887 and 1900 combined the offices of Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister in his own person. He was therefore, one of the most experienced of British Foreign Secretaries, and yet his handling of foreign affairs was not always favourably received. The combination of the two important offices was often regarded as a mistake and a cause of weakness in the British government.[17] Furthermore despite his wide knowledge and experience, Salisbury seemed to have little concern for the administration of the Foreign Office itself, and the charge of indifference was not infrequent.[18] The trouble was that Salisbury liked to work in isolation and away from the office, usually in his country estate at Hatfield. He was by nature self-contained, cautious and conservative, possessed of a sort of intellectual aloofness which made it difficult for those outside of his immediate circles to understand him.[19]

Salisbury's China policy in his last administration (1895-1902) was characterized by weakness, indecision and fear of involvement. Because of his firm belief in the importance of the integrity of the Chinese Empire, he

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[17] D. Bishop, op.cit. 86; S. J. Reid, The Prime Ministers of Queen Victoria (London 1890-5, new rev.ed. 1905-6) VII, 206-8.

[18] Sir John Tilley and Sir S. Gaselee, The Foreign Office (London 1933) 139, recounts how Lady Salisbury once remarked that Lord Salisbury knew no more about the clerks at the Foreign Office than he did about the housemaids at home, and that he did not know his own precis writer by sight.

[19] Salisbury's personality and capabilities are variously criticised or defended in these works: Lady G. Cecil, Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury (London 1921-32) IV; Dame Lilian Penson, Foreign Affairs under the Third Marquis of Salisbury (London 1962); J. A. S. Grenville, Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy (London 1964) 3-23; A. L. Kennedy, Salisbury 1830-1903 (London 1953) 347-9; Hon. Clive Bigham, The Prime Ministers of Britain, 1721-1921 (London 1922) 306-8.

was prepared to sacrifice British self-interests to prevent the break-up of China.[20] For this he was widely criticized. The North China Herald was outspoken: "... British policy as directed by him during the past few years cannot be looked upon with pride and gratification ..."[21] The London and China Express conceded that Salisbury jeopardized British rights and opportunities only because of his desire for peace. Nevertheless the faith of the nation in his leadership was shaken, especially when he failed to appreciate the general alarm over Russian ambitions and allowed them a free hand in Manchuria after the Boxer crisis.[22] Even the Times on the day Salisbury's death was announced, asserted that "It would be a mistake to say that Lord Salisbury was an ideal Prime Minister, or even an ideal Minister for Foreign Affairs."[23] Sir Henry Blake, then Governor of Hong Kong, confided to the British Minister in Peking, Sir Ernest Satow, that Salisbury "was not a great man. Obstinate to a point, and then liable to break short off like a carrot."[24] Salisbury's handling of Sun Yat-sen and the early years of the Chinese revolutionary movement seemed to justify all the charges of his critics.[25]

Lord Lansdowne succeeded Salisbury in the Foreign Office (1900-5). His administration was best known for termination Britain's isolation in

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[20]The view was generally held in England and Europe that after 1900 China was on the brink of dissolution, and Salisbury was blamed for not securing opportunities for Britain in the forthcoming partition. He ended up by attempting to negotiate agreements separately with Germany and Russia. See A. L. Kennedy, op.cit. 321-2.

[21]North China Herald 16 July, 1902, p.111, col.3.

[22]London and China Express, 18 July 1902, p.586, col. 1-2, leader.

[23]Times 24 Aug. 1903, p. 7 col. 2-4, leader

[24]Blake to Satow, 26 Aug. 1903, PRO 30/33.9/16.

[25]See Chapter II.

international relations and negotiating the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Lansdowne was partly of French parentage, which was responsible for a Continental flavour in his personality and politics that was agreeable to many.[26] He also had a particular flair for foreign affairs which made his term of office a successful one, though it was perhaps not a great nor brilliant period.[27] His policy in China in the post-Boxer era was announced in a session in the House of Lords: Lansdowne believed, as did Salisbury, that Britain must seek to avoid any danger of a partition of China. Furthermore although the temptation was present, Britain must refrain from any tendencies to place the Chinese government in the tutelage of any foreign Power. What he aimed at was the promotion of the freedom of commerce in China in cooperation with all the other interested Powers.[28]

Lansdowne's work in the Foreign Office was completed and crowned by his successor, Sir Edward Grey (1905-16). Grey was a politician of thorough straight-forwardness and grit, whose long tenure of the Foreign Office brought him prominence. He was fairminded, moderate, calm and reflective, and always worked in close cooperation with his staff at the Foreign Office. He had sometimes been charged with being of a "negative character," which one biographer has interpreted as meaning there was no self-seeking, vanity nor display or self advertisement.[29] Grey pursued a policy of peace when events

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[26] B. Dugdale, Arthur James Balfour (London 1936) I, 335.

[27] A. L. Kennedy, op.cit. 96-7, 138.

[28] Hansard, 18 July 1902, House of Lords, Vol. 111, p. 658.

[29] G. Murray, The Foreign Policy of Sir Edward Grey (Oxford 1915) 122.

in Europe were heading towards the first World War. Despite advice to the contrary, Grey would not engage in experiments or unnecessary opportunism in his foreign policies, and his judgments always prevailed. "I did not regard anything except my own letters and official papers as deciding policy."[30] He was widely respected among those who worked with him, and was regarded as the kind of chief "any official would most wish to serve."[31]

In China Grey stood for the preservation of the status quo, the strengthening of alliances, and the promotion of trade, if the latter did not conflict with his first two objectives.[32] In 1906 he announced the general principles of his China policy to the new British Minister in Peking, Sir John Jordan. Grey stipulted that the old policy of concession extortion and the use of force must be terminated. The new policy would combine firmness with tact, caution with opportunism. It was necessary to maintain a sympathetic attitude towards the endeavours of the Chinese government and people to reform their institutions, lending them a hand when required. Grey also desired closer cooperation between the Consuls and the Legation in China.[33] Grey was firmly against interference in Chinese internal affairs, and by 1911 felt that the British position in China was secure enough to counsel absolute neutrality in the Chinese Revolution.[34]

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[30] Quoted in George M. Trevelyan, Grey of Fallodon (London 1937) 169; cf. A. J. P. Taylor, op.cit, 97, who says that Grey was the "prisoner of his staff." See also A. L. Kennedy, op.cit. 140-1; P. Knaplund, Introduction to E. Grey, Speeches on Foreign Affairs 1904-1914 (London 1931) 10-15.

[31] W. Strang, op.cit. 270.

[32] S. J. Reid, op.cit. 301-2.

[33] Grey to Jordan, 31 Aug. 1906 (confidential) FO 371/35.

[34] S. J. Reid, op.cit. 302.

In practical terms, despite the qualities of masterfulness and leadership in the Secretaries of State, a good deal of the preliminary policy-decisions were made by lower level officials in the Foreign Office. In the China Department of this period, there were some outstanding individuals. Sir Thomas Sanderson, Permanent Undersecretary (1894-1906) and Sir Francis Bertie, Assistant Undersecretary (1894-1903) were sharply contrasted in temperament and policies, yet they managed to work closely together on the affairs of China. Bertie was brusque, peremptory and rather arrogant, respecting neither persons nor reputations. He disliked public recognition, often used blunt language, but was a man of a shrewd mind. Since he was a strict taskmaster and always insisted on accuracy, he did not consistently get on well with his juniors in the Foreign Office. Morrison of the Times dismissed him as "an ignorant man who had never read a book since he left Eton,"[35] and described him as "a florid-faced overeating Englishman" whose views were "so vulgarly expressed and so ill-considered that he wasn't worth listening to."[36] Bertie was promoted to the Embassy in Rome in 1903 and Paris in 1905.[37] Sanderson served forty-seven years at the Foreign Office, and was somewhat fussy and set in his ways. But he had complete knowledge of the administration of the office, and on principle advocated cautious and unemotional policies. He abhorred extremism, such as often expounded by Bertie.[38] The direction of the Chinese Department passed from Bertie to Sir Francis Campbell (Assistant Undersecretary 1903-11) with whom Sir John Jordan formed a close friendship by their mutual

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[35] C. Pearl, op.cit. 161.

[36] Quoted from William Lavino, the Times representative in Paris, in C. Pearl, op.cit. 170.

[37] See G. Monger, op.cit. 99; V. Chirol to Satow, 31 July 1901, PRO 30/33 10/4 in which Bertie advocated that Britain ought to have destroyed Peking root and branch immediately after the relief expedition in 1900, so that the Court would not be able to return; see also J. Tilley and S. Gaselee, op.cit. 130-1.

[38] G. Monger, op.cit. 100.

interest in China. Campbell was succeeded by Sir Walter Langley after his death in December 1911.[39]

If the administration of the China Department was fairly straightforward at the hands of experienced officials in the Foreign Office, the same could not be said of the Colonial Office in its supervision of the colonial territories. It has been said of British colonial policy, "Why - there is no such thing; Great Britain has merely blundered into the best places of the earth and means to keep them."[40] Traditionally the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies carried with it no prestige, and it was generally shunned by prominent politicians.[41] The very nature of the collection of widely divergent territories under its administration made it questionable whether any colonial policy was possible. At any time a line of action could be upset by the impetuosity of a Governor, by the misfortunes of war somewhere in the Empire, or by the sheer rapidity of changing circumstances in the distant lands. Consequently there was little continuity of policy, the office was generally run by a host of junior officials, and there were constant conflicts with the Foreign Office and with the local Governors. The Colonial Office had by the late 19th century degenerated into a sort of private club where the atmosphere was variously "friendly, informal, or even cosy ...."[42] It required the appointment of a dynamic Colonial Secretary such as Chamberlain to undertake complete changes in the prestige and efficiency of the Colonial Office.

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39 Langley to Jordan, 29 Dec. 1911 (private) FO 350/1

40 Quoted in H. E. Egerton, A Short History of British Colonial Policy 1606-1909 (London, 9th ed. 1932) Preface.

41 See H. L. Hall, The Colonial Office (London 1937) 52; Sir George V. Fiddes, The Dominions and Colonial Offices,(London 1926) 6.

42 Sir C. Jeffries, The Colonial Office (London 1956) 18-9; see also H. L. Hall, op.cit. 157-8; Sir C. Bruce, The Broad Stone of Empire (London 1910) 293; Sir C. Parkinson, The Colonial Office From Within (London 1947) 99-100; Sir F. Swettenham, Footprints in Malaya (London 1942) 161.

Salisbury's appointment of Joseph Chamberlain to the Colonial Office (1895-1903) was a complete surprise to British political circles. Hitherto Colonial Secretaries had been placid and insignificant personages, "with not a bark nor a bite to their names."[43] Chamberlain was aggressive, forceful, cool and hardhitting; a man of action rather than words, and he soon proceeded to change the face of the Colonial Office and its public image. He improved communications between London and the colonies; sought to dictate foreign as well as colonial policies; battled with the Treasury, and began the gigantic task of reform in the colonial administration which was not completed for thirty years.[44] Chamberlain also turned his mind to the problem of China, and urged there the opening of markets to the fair and even competition of all foreign Powers, while refraining from any tendencies of acquiring territory.[45]

None of Chamberlain's successors at the Colonial Office however, came close to his energy and dynamism, not to say controversial policies. Alfred Lyttelton (1903-5) by contrast was hesitant and diffident in personality. He was a man of great sympathy, who was easy to work with and who introduced the human element into colonial politics. He left behind him no resentment, no enmity. But he was unhappily caught in the problem of Chinese coolie labour in the Rand, and handled badly the agitation in sympathy with the Chinese coolies.[46] Both Lord Elgin (1905-8) and Lord Crewe (1908-10) were quiet, ordinary men with retiring dispositions. The colonial affairs of Hong Kong

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[43] L. Creswicke, The Life of the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain (London 1904) III, 4.

[44] For Chamberlain's achievements, see G. L. Gavin and J. Amery The Life of Joseph Chamberlain (London 1932-51) III, 242-53; C. E. Carrington, The British Overseas (Cambridge, 1950) 837-41; Sir C. Petrie, Joseph Chamberlain, (London 1940) 62-3.

[45] P. Joseph, Foreign Diplomacy in China (London 1928) 379; G.E. Hubbard, op.cit. 23.

[46] E.C. Wingfield-Stratford, The Victorian Aftermath (London1933) 96-8; See also E. Lyttelton, Alfred Lyttelton (London 1917) 286-313; J. A. Spender and C. Asquith, Life of Herbert Henery Asquith, Lord Oxford and Asquith (London 1932) I, 365-6.

and the Straits Settlements of this period continued to be dominated by the personalities and idiosyncracies of the individual Governors appointed to these colonies. The home government at best could only supervise, and not judge.

The Governors of Hong Kong were necessarily more closely in touch with the Chinese revolutionary movement, due to the proximity of the Colony to the Chinese mainland. Sir William Robinson (1891-98) governed during a particularly trying period. Plague was endemic on the China Coast and in Hong Kong in 1894, but Chinese prejudice against Western medicine frustrated most of Robinson's emergency measures. The disease also added to the Colony's financial difficulties, and the tense situation in the Far East made defense questions urgent. The circumstances thus served to convince Robinson of the extreme unfriendliness of the Chinese towards England, and he became an advocate of forceful policies in dealing with China. His precipitate banishment of Sun Yat-sen from the Colony in 1896 characterized his attitude towards the Chinese revolutionaries.[47]

Sir Henry Blake (1898-1903) hesitated to go out to the Colony when first appointed Governor, but once arrived he quickly found himself a place in the local communities. Blake was known for his genuine affection for the people in all the places in which he had worked, and this was again proved true in Hong Kong. He became intimate friends with many of the leaders in the Chinese population and through them cultivated a great deal of sympathy for the reform movement then nascent in China. On the other hand, his relations with the Colonial Office in London were often strained, mainly because of his tendency to act independently of outside control and take hasty action without benefit

[47] This is discussed in Chapter II. See G. B. Endacott, A History of Hong Kong (London 1958) 215-27, for an account of Robinson's administration.

of instructions.[48] But his administration was a good one, and an outstanding achievement was the elimination of the practice of torture being applied to Chinese prisoners extradited British territories.[49] In his parting speech, Blake summed up his own views of his years in Hong Kong:[50]

> "I will touch upon a statement that has been reiterated many times during the term of my administration. That is that I am too pro-Chinese in my views .... If it means that I have favoured Chinese members of the community at the expense of Europeans, I deny it most strenuously ... to give equal protection to all, and to bring home the feeling that under the British flag, justice is pure and unpurchasable, and every man through all the grades ... is free to think what he likes, to speak what he thinks, without let or hindrance so long as he obeys the laws .... This is the estimate I have formed of my duty and I have endeavoured to carry it out with a keen and abiding sense of my responsibility ...."

Blake was succeeded by Sir Matthew Nathan (1904-7) whose reputation as an energetic reformer and an able and broadminded administrator in the Gold Coast preceded his arrival in the Colony. Everywhere he served Nathan was identified with success and progress, and in Hong Kong he contributed much to the material well-being of the population.[51]

Sir Frederick Lugard (1907-11) was a man of iron will. In 1906 he resigned the High Commission of Northern Nigeria because he was dissatisfied with Colonial Office restrictions on his administration, and also displeased that Downing Street would not allow him to serve his office in England every summer. In Hong Kong his hatred of intervention and intolerance of superior authority continued to cause friction with the government at home.[52] He never really liked the Colony nor the people there, and soon regretted ever accepting the Governorship. He confessed to his brother that he felt "horribly circumscribed,"

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[48] His sudden visit to the Viceroy of Canton in April 1899 was an example. His action was criticised on all sides. See Blake tel. C.O. 1 April 1899, CO 129/290, and subsequent correspondence.

[49] See Chapter IV.

[50] May to C.O., 27 Nov. 1903, CO 129/320.

[51] See the London and China Express, 1 July 1904, p. 538, col. 1, and China Mail 29 July 1904, p. 4 col. 2-3, leader.

[52] See F. Lugard, No. 8, Series A, British Commonwealth Leaflets, (London 1946).

and that in Hong Kong "my role is to perpetually functionalize ... to endure fools gladly, to sign my name perpetually and agree to the faultless suggestions of the Honorable the Colonial Secretary".[53] His relations with the Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong, F. H. May (who became Governor after him in 1912) were hostile at the best of times, although the personal differences between the two men did not adversely affect the day-to-day duties of their offices.[54]

Lugard was in Hong Kong at a time when the Chinese revolutionary movement was passing from its propaganda phase to a period of action, and there were many incidents involving the Chinese in the Colony. The Governor had no patience nor sympathy with reformers or revolutionaries, and strove only to keep the peace in the Colony and expel all disruptive elements. When the Hong Kong Chinese joined in the 1908 Japanese boycott,[55] Lugard acted with speed and severity, earning a charge of being high-handed from the Colonial Office which was not previously consulted as to his line of policy.[56] When the Chinese Revolution had taken place and a republic declared in Canton, it fell to Lugard to offer refuge to the ex-Viceroy of Canton, though he refused adamantly to recognise the new government in China.[57] On the whole though, despite the difficulties under which he laboured, both in Hong Kong and from London, Lugard was one of the outstanding Governors in the history of Hong Kong. His interest in educational reforms culminated in the establishment of

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[53] Quoted in M. Perham, Lugard, the Years of Authority, 1898-1945 (London 1960) 287.

[54] M. Perham, op.cit. 356.

[55] See Chapter V.

[56] M. Perham, op.cit. 307.

[57] M. Perham, op.cit. 360.

the University of Hong Kong in 1912, and in 1910 he submitted a detailed scheme for the general economic and administrative reform of China.[58]

The Straits Settlements figured in the early Chinese revolutionary movement when Sun Yat-sen and others made frequent trips to the Colonies to solicit funds and support. Sir Charles Mitchell was Governor then (1896-99) but due to his ailing health Sir Frank Swettenham (then Resident-General of the Federated Malay States) often administered for him, until Swettenham took over the Governorship in 1901. Swettenham was a scholar of Malay, completely versed in the local cultures of the area. His tenure was characterized by vigorous initiative, administrative ability, and the great confidence and respect with which he was regarded by the natives. In a tribute to his predecessor, Sir John Anderson (1904-11) compared the advances made under Swettenham in British Malaya to the other states of the area: "To pass from one to the other is to pass from the Anglo-Saxon period to the twentieth century."[59]

If it was true that in the British colonial administration policies were more often formulated by the distant Governors than by London, then it was certainly a fact that policies regarding the affairs of China were also initiated by such men on the spot as the Legation staff in Peking and the Consular staff in the various provinces, rather than by the Foreign Office itself. The role of Britain in China had always been the work of individuals,

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[58] Lugard to Grey, 16 June 1910, FO 371/877. The project was ridiculed by the F.O. and Jordan as being too far-fetched. Lord Crewe commented, "Sir F. Lugard ... a man of very fertile mind and wide views, and one who may not fully appreciate the difficulties involved." Crewe minutes, ibid.

[59] Quoted in H. F. Egerton, op.cit. 231; see also F. Swettenham, op.cit. 161-3.

notably in the customs administration, the salt gabelle, and the postal services. Thus official British reactions to the Chinese revolutionary movement mainly originated from the Legation in Peking, under the direction of the British Minister who possessed the exact knowledge on which decisions from London must be based, and who was the Secretary of State's chief means of implementing whatever policies he decided on. The day-to-day contacts with the Chinese Government were entirely in the hands of the Minister, who enjoyed virtual independence from central control. In Chinese as in other foreign affairs, passing incidents often proved subsequently to be crucial, while crises usually arose without warning. On such occasions the actual conduct of foreign relations would depend on the interaction of personalities rather than on institutions or even central instructions. In the particular case of China, attitudes could further be affected by the "deadening" influence of life in Peking, where diplomats were walled up in isolation from other nationals and completely detached from the Chinese. "Perhaps the most dedicated exponents of this splended isolation were the British. In a little transplanted world, they allayed their nostalgia with dinners and dancing, gossip and golf, happily ignorant of the customs or language or feelings of the people they lived among."[60] Nevertheless Peking did provide the environment for the careers of some prominent diplomatists, notably Sir Ernest Satow and Sir John Jordan, the two greatest authorities on the Far East in their day.

Their predecessors in the British Legation at Peking included Sir Nicholas R. O'Conor (1892-5) who did not conceal his opinion that British interests in China were up to 1895 entirely trade interests. From the first O'Conor showed keen enthusiasm for every improvement he could seek for the sake of the

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[60] C. Pearl, op.cit. 86; see also Mrs. A. Little, Intimate China (London 1899) 295.

British merchant in China. The North China Herald applauded his efforts as being "an infinite improvement on the sluggish but courtly Sir John Walsham"[61] (1886-92).

Sir Claude M. MacDonald (1896-1900) was an elongated man, with a long nose, reproachful eyes, and long, lovingly waxed thin moustaches.[62] He had been in the Army since 1872, and in 1896 retired from his Commission to take up his diplomatic post at Peking. His appointment was naturally a surprise to many, who thought that the China situation needed a man of great skill and experience in diplomacy, not a militarist.[63] Other reviews reflect the opinion that perhaps a man of action was a change for the better.[64] Nevertheless MacDonald proceeded to handle political situations as if they were military manoeuvres and liked to call for landing parties to reinforce his diplomatic endeavours. Lord Salisbury on one occasion chided him, "I think your proposals are too drastic."[65] MacDonald was thus hardly the sort of man who would have any patience or sympathy with the reform and revolutionary movements then beginning in China.[66] His absence from Peking during the 1898 reform coup and his subsequent pronouncements regarding his ignorance of the

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[61] North China Herald 29 Nov. 1895, p.885, col. 2-3 leader.

[62] Described by Morrison, in C. Pearl, op.cit. 83.

[63] Times 13 Jan. 1896, p.9, col. 4-5 leader. Morrison in his diary wrote that he would have endorsed the popular estimate of MacDonald as "imperfectly educated, ... weak, flippant and garrulous ..." but in a later manuscript explained, "Such were the criticisms levelled against a British officer of singular charm of manner, who had not sought the post thrust on him by Lord Salisbury, and who quickly inspired to an unusual degree the confidence of his famous chief." C. Pearl, op.cit. 83.

[64] See the North China Herald, 17 Jan 1896, p. 76, col. 2-3, and London and China Express 17 Jan. 1896, p. 62, col. 3.

[65] See MacDonald Tel. F.O. 20 July 1896, and Salisbury tel. MacDonald, 21 July 1896, FO 17/1280.

[66] MacDonald to Bertie, 2 Feb 1899 (private) FO 17/1372.

activities of K'ang Yu-wei[67] won him some criticism for lack of foresight. But he soon regained the limelight among the British public for his masterly organization during the siege of Peking in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. Satow confided to Villiers at the Foreign Office that "possibly MacDonald being a soldier would have found the Siege rather stimulating."[68]

In 1900 MacDonald was transferred to the Tokyo Embassy, and Sir Ernest Satow left Tokyo to take his place in Peking (1900-6) Satow was a short man, iron-grey with an abnormally large forehead. "In a vague way he seems to suggest the old Japanese drawings of learned men ...."[69] Which was not inappropriate as he was a scholar of Japanese as well as an experienced diplomat. Satow himself admitted that he was somewhat of a heretic to popular ideas, that he believed the Orientals had rights as well as the Occidentals, and that imperial necessities sometimes overrode local interests.[70] His appointment to Peking was welcomed because of his great learning and knowledge of the Oriental character and Satow came to China believing that the Chinese were capable of developing into a great nation.[71] He was an industrious administrator and suggested that the Consular staff in China should work in closer cooperation with the Legation, despite the increased responsibility that this would entail for the Minister.[72] Sir Edward Grey always appreciated having such

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[67] See Chapter III.

[68] Satow Diary, 20 August 1900, PRO 30/33 16/3.

[69] "M.A.P." magazine, 29 Sept. 1900, PRO 30/33 10/10. See also B.M. Allen, The Rt. Hon. Sir Ernest Satow (London 1933) 117-36; George A. Lensen, Korea and Manchuria between Russia and Japan, the Observations of Sir Earnest Satow (Florida 1966) 5-16.

[70] Satow's Diary, 25 Sept. 1900, PRO 30/33 16/3.

[71] North China Herald, 17 Oct. 1900, p. 820, col. 1.

[72] Satow to Grey 27 Dec. 1905, PRO 30/33 14/16.

a Minister as Satow in the Far East, and on his retirement Grey regretted that the government had to "lose the benefit .... of your judgment and experience upon which they have always been able to rely with confidence."[73] The London and China Express too praised his term of office at the Peking Legation for having retained the goodwill of Chinese officialdom and then proceeding to show "that the velvet glove had a lining of very hard steel .... He has distinctly raised the prestige of his country in his dealings with the Tsungli-yamen and its modern successor the Wai-wu Pu ..."[74] Morrison of the Times alone appeared to entertain a personal enmity towards Satow. In a splenetic mood Morrison called him "a selfish old dryasdust who uses me and gives me nothing in return but frequent bad dinners...."[75] This was probably the result of Satow's investigation into Morrison's sources of information which were often superior even to the Legation's intelligence service.[76]

Sir John Jordan (1906-16), widely recognised as the most brilliant of British Ministers in China, rose through the China Consular Service which he joined in 1876 as a student interpreter in Peking. In 1896 he was appointed Consul-General at Seoul, where he became Minister-Resident in 1901. During this period he made lasting friendships with the Chinese Commissioners at Seoul, notably T'ang Shao-i and Yüan Shih-k'ai. These friendships were to be of service in later years in promoting understanding during the revolutionary negotiations.[77] When the Legation at Seoul was withdrawn in 1906, Jordan was

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[73] Grey to Satow, 25 Oct. 1906, PRO 30/33 7/5.

[74] London and China Express, 11 May 1906, p. 352-3.

[75] C. Pearl, op.cit, 140.

[76] See Satow to Bertie, 17 Jan. 1901, PRO 30/33 14/11. Satow suspected a leakage through the U.S. Legation.

[77] See Chapter VII.

appointed to Peking. By that time he had acquired complete intimacy with Chinese affairs and spoke the Chinese language fluently. He was sympathetic to all Chinese causes, but was not overly compliant. On the contrary, he was firm and straightforward, and if he sometimes appeared harsh to Chinese officials they nevertheless respected his views. The American Minister in Peking found it a pleasure and source of instruction to work with the British representative.[78]

Jordan was of a kind and cheerful nature, winning the affection and esteem of all those who came in contact with him, Chinese as well as British. He had a gift of style, and his despatches to London were models of conciseness, interest and lucidity. Jordan was extraordinarily conscientious, and until the Foreign Office suggested it never thought to delegate to his junior staff the burden of writing the useful Annual Intelligence Reports of developments in China.[79] On another occasion when the Foreign Office offered to bring him home on paid leave to synchronize with a visit of T'ang Shao-i to England, Jordan declined on the grounds that there were outstanding problems to be settled in Peking which required his continued presence in China.[80]

Jordan entertained great feelings of affection for the Chinese people, and even the Chinese officials in Peking knew that he would never support a cause unless he was convinced of its justice to both China and Britain. He told Campbell, "No one will be more heartily pleased than I shall be, if China works out her own salvation without any serious trouble. They are a fine people and one cannot live amongst them without liking them."[81] He freely

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[78] P. Reinsch, An American Diplomat in China (London 1922) 51.

[79] See F.O. Minutes on Jordan's Annual Report for the year 1909, submitted 31 Jan. 1910, FO 371/866.

[80] Campbell tel. Jordan, 23 Dec. 1908, and Jordan tel. Campbell, 25 Dec. (private) FO 371/433.

[81] Jordan to Campbell, 26 Dec. 1907 (private) FO 350/5.

admitted that he was partial to the Chinese over the Japanese: "... there is something about the Chinaman that makes him a more human and likeable being than the average Japanese ...."[82] It was the maintenance of this special relationship with the native population which made Jordan so valuable as the British representative in China during the final years before the Revolution transformed that Empire into a modern republic. Grey was the first to recognize the contributions such a capable Minister could make in the field of British relations with China. "I rely very much on your knowledge of how to deal with the Chinese, and I hope you will write to me freely, or telegraph, whenever you require support or think we are not taking the right line at home."[83] But perhaps the best testimony to Jordan's career in Peking would be the spontaneous attribute of a junior official at the Legation, Arnold Robertson, who wrote to Lampson at the Foreign Office, "I hope it is fully realized at home what a splendid Minister we have here. He is worth the whole of the rest of his colleagues put together, and is universally liked and respected. It is a genuine pleasure to work under him."[84] B. Alston, a senior clerk, minuted, "I may assure him privately that Sir John Jordan is appreciated. I have heard nothing but praise of him (and unstinted) ...."[85]

Despite the presence of such outstanding diplomats in the country, the events in China during 1895-1912 formed only one aspect of Britain's foreign interests in this period. China was after all very remote and Britons in general had little to do with that Empire. Whatever information and education

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[82] Jordan to Campbell, 2 Feb.1911 (Private) FO 350/7.

[83] Grey to Jordan, 13 Aug 1909, PRO 800/43.

[84] Robertson to Lampson, 15 Oct 1907, (private) FO 371/233.

[85] Alston's minutes on above, ibid.

the British public received had to come from those newspapers which carried specialized items from China. The importance of the press in linking Victorian England and China must therefore be emphasized. As British statesmen at this time were concerned first with the African wars, then the near Eastern problem and finally with developments in Europe leading to 1914, it was doubtful whether London would be free to follow a definite policy in the Far East. In realistic terms the general guide-lines were worked out by men on the spot, who met each situation as it arose. British interests in China and in the revolutionary movement thus tended to be sporadically aroused by the occurrence of "incidents" or the suasion of some energetic representative in China. Personalities were therefore one of the key factors in the formulation of policies towards China.

CHAPTER II

SUN YAT-SEN AND THE FIRST REVOLUTIONARY ATTEMPT

The Chinese revolutionary movement developed out of the special conditions, geographical, political and social, which obtained in the South of the Chinese Empire, and in particular in the province of Kwangtung. The Cantonese people who inhabit the province had been for many decades the closest in touch with Western trade and Western ideas, and they consequently developed a tradition of advanced thinking of a type which readily fitted them for anti-government movements of various kinds during the Ch'ing dynasty, (1644-1911).[1] They have thus been called the "rebellion-makers-in-ordinary to the Chinese people."[2] So it was that the Chinese revolution of 1911 also had its beginnings among a group of Cantonese radical thinkers. Yet as it was a movement subversive to the existing government, it could not be conveniently nurtured on Chinese soil, and it came about that the British colony of Hong Kong became the secret headquarters of this early revolutionary movement.[3] It was only when the movement was stabilised after 1905 by efficient leadership and diversified membership that it shifted the bulk of its activities back into Chinese territory.

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[1] This feature of the Cantonese is discussed in C. A. Middleton-Smith, The British in China (London, 1920) 121-131; W. W. Clayton, "Canton, 1901-1910" in the Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal (July 1911) 387-92, B. S. Lee, Modern Canton (Shanghai, 1936) and J. A. Turner, Kwangtung (London 1894) 171-9. See also North China Herald of 28 Feb. 1898, p. 305-6. For an interesting analysis of Cantonese xenophobia see Frederic Wakeman, Strangers at the Gate, Social Disorder in South China 1839-1861 (California 1966) especially Chapters 4 and 5.

[2] N. D. Palmer, "K'ang Yu-wei" in Current History N.S. XV, 84 (1948) 89.

[3] Feng Tzu-yu Ko-ming i-shih (Chungking, 1945) III, 227 says, "In the revolutionary movement, the importance of Hong Kong occupied the first chapter of its history."

Hong Kong in the late 19th century was in many respects ideally situated for its role as a revolutionary headquarters. Ever since its establishment as a British Crown Colony by the Treaties of Nanking, 1842, it had steadily grown and had become an important trading mart between the Far East and the Western World. Its population was predominantly Chinese, more than 80 percent of whom were Cantonese.[4] But owing to its proximity to the Chinese mainland, a sizeable proportion of this community consisted of Chinese who had had to flee their homeland for various reasons. A ready example was the influx during the Taiping Rebellion.[5] Consequently the Chinese population of the Colony was heterogeneous and representative of all social classes. Generally it remained stable and law-abiding, though the Chinese still maintained close consciousness of events in China. By the late 19th century, when internal conditions in China deteriorated, largely the result of administrative inefficiency and incapacity to deal with foreign pressures, there were significant stirrings among a section of the Chinese in Hong Kong. This was to be the genesis of the revolutionary movement.

Early in 1892 a group of well-educated young Chinese employed in British shipping concerns began to interest themselves in the political future of China. They held meetings to discuss the hopelessness of the Ch'ing government when compared with the efficiency of the British system as they saw it in Hong Kong, and they began to talk of reforms for their homeland.

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[4] Hong Kong Government Gazette of 22 Aug. 1891; Hong Kong Government, Historical and Statistical Abstract of the Colony of Hong Kong, 1841-1930 (Hong Kong, 1932) chart. 7.

[5] During the twelve years of the rebellion, the Chinese population of Hong Kong soared from 35,517 in 1852 to 117,868 in 1864. See charts 2 and 3 of the Historical and Statistical Abstract.

These meetings led to the formation of a secret political association under the cover of an educational concern, the Fu-jen Wen-she, in March 1892. The two leaders of this venture were Yang Ch'ü-yün and Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai.[6] Yang, born and educated in the Colony, came from a well-to-do family, and was employed in one of the largest shipping companies in Hong Kong, the David Sassoon and Sons' Company. Hsieh was born in Australia, but received his early education in Hong Kong at the Government Central School. There he came into the company of many "promising and patriotic young men," and gradually evolved the concept of reform in China and of driving out the Manchus from the Chinese throne. The membership list of the Society included fourteen others, and there is no indication that it ever expanded beyond these sixteen founder members. They chose as their motto "Ducit Amor Patriae" (Be whole-heartedly patriotic)[7] and aspired to promote education among the Chinese people of the Colony, as well as propagate China's need for political reforms. In itself therefore, this restricted group of young patriots would not have been able to achieve much, but it was to form the basis of a revolutionary society soon to be established by Sun Yat-sen.

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[6]Biographies of Yang are given in Ch'en Shao-pai, "Hsing Chung Hui Ko-ming Shih pieh-lu appended in Ch'en Te-yün (ed) Ch'en Shao-pai hsien-sheng ai-ssu-lu (Canton, 1934?) 114; Hsüeh Chün-tu, 'Sun Yat-sen, Yang Ch'ü-yün and the early revolutionary movement in China" in Journal of Asian Studies, XIX, 3 (May 1960) 307; Wang Hsing-jui, "Ch'ing-chi Fu-wen Wen-she yü ko-ming yün-tung ti kuan-hsi" in Shih-hsueh Tsa-chih (Chung-King) I, 1 (Dec 1945) 36; Chou Lu, Chung-kuo Kuo-ming-t'ang shih-kao (Shanghai, 1938) IV, 1226; Lo Hsiang-lin, Kuo-fu Chih ta-hsüeh shih-tai (Taiwan, 1954) 29. For Hsieh, see C. Duncan, Tse Tsan-tai (London, 1917); Tse Tsan-tai, The Chinese Republic - Secret History of the Revolution (Hong Kong, 1924) 7; Hsueh, op.cit. 308; Feng Tzu-yu, op.cit. II, 23-5; Ch'en Shao-pai, op.cit, 114b. The Cantonese rendering of Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai is Tse Tsan-tai

[7]Though not quite accurate, the translation of the slogan is given by Hsieh, in Tse Tsan-tai, op.cit.8; see also Feng Tzu-yu, Hua-ch'iao ko-ming kai-kuo shih (Chungking, 1946) 3; Hua-ch'iao ko-ming tzu-chih shih-hua (Taiwan, 1954) 4; Hsüeh Chün-tu, Huang Hsing and the Chinese Revolution (Stanford 1961) 27.

Sun Yat-sen, or Sun Wen, (1866-1925), was born in a village in Kwangtung province.[8] In 1879 he was sent to join his brother Sun Wei in Hawaii, where he was educated at British and American Missionary schools. By 1883 he was sent back to China, his brother fearing that he was becoming too Westernised. After a short stay in his native village, where his Westernization, manifest in outspoken criticism of traditional social and political beliefs, brought disgrace upon himself and his family, he was sent to the Government Central School in Hong Kong in 1884. By then he was already pondering the problem of reform in China. In the free thinking atmosphere of Hong Kong his tendencies were therefore further encouraged and fostered.

In 1886 Sun joined the Po Chi Hospital in Canton as a medical student, and there he met a fellow student, Cheng Shih-liang, who encouraged his radical thinking and even implanted the idea of a revolution in China in Sun's mind. The next year, Sun transferred to the Hong Kong Medical College, and from then on he began to devote much of his leisure hours to discussion of political reform and change in China. His associates at this time included Yang Ho-lin, a shop-keeper in Hong Kong, who offered his premises as a club-house for his friends; Ch'en Shao-pai, a Cantonese from a good family, and a colleague of Sun for some time at the College of Medicine; and Yu Shao-wan (Yu Lieh) whom Sun met in Canton and brought along to Hong Kong to join his discussion group. These four called themselves the "Four Brigands of the Ch'ing Dynasty." There was also Lu Hao-tung, another student at the College

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[8] Accounts of Sun's early life are given in P. Linebarger, Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Republic (New York, 1925) 6-173; Wu Shou-i, Kuo-fu ti Ch'ing-nien shih-tai (Taipei, 1960) 14-48; H. B. Restarick, Sun Yat-sen, Liberator of China (Yale, 1931) 1-26; S. Chen and R. Payne, Sun Yat-sen, a Portrait (New York, 1946) 5-25; Lo Chia-lun (ed) Kuo-fu Sun Chung-shan Hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'u-kao (Taipei, 1958) I, 1-30; L. Sharman, Sun Yat-sen, His Life and Its Meaning (New York 1934, reissued 1968, California) Part I.

of Medicine, who later became the first martyr for the revolutionary cause.[9] These young men soon began talking of following the foot-steps of the Taipings and raising a revolution against the Ch'ing government; their rebellious intentions thus distinguished this group from the less radical operators of the Fu-jen Society.

Yet it cannot be concluded that Sun Yat-sen was a convinced rebel against the Manchus from the very beginning. In 1894 at least, he tried to work through legal constitutional channels by presenting a petition to Li Hung-chang, then Governor of Chihli, asking for reforms under Li's direction.[10] His presumptuousness, indeed arrogance, in sending the petition failed to win the favour of the Governor. It was after the failure of this venture, together with China's defeat by Japan in the 1894-5 war, that Sun embarked upon a real revolutionary career.

His first step was to return to Hawaii, where his brother enjoyed a certain amount of influence in the mercantile community, and where Sun himself had made friends during his earlier sojourn in the islands. Gathering a handful of supporters, Sun established his first revolutionary society, the Hsing Chung Hui (Revive China Society) on 24 November, 1894. He was elected chairman, and it was significant that on the occasion of this

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[9] For accounts of these men see M. B. Jansen, The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen (Cambridge, Mass. 1954) 61; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih I, 38-9; T'an Yung-nien, Hsin-hai ko-ming; Chou Lu, op.cit. IV, 1211; Wu Shou-i, op.cit. hui-i lu (Hong Kong, 1958) I, 39-40.

[10] See Ch'en Shao-pai, op.cit, 94b-95; Hsiung Nan-yüeh, Sun Chung-shan hsien-sheng hsüan-chi (Hong Kong, n.d.) 167-80; Chung-hua Min-kuo K'ai-kuo wu-shih nien wen-hsien pien-tsuan wei-yüan-hui (ed) Chung-hua Min-kuo K'ai-kuo wu-shih nien wen-hsien (Taipei, 1963-) IX, 275-6; Sun Yat-sen, Kuo-fu ch'üan - chi (Taiwan, 1957) II, 81; Ch'en Hsi-ch'i, T'ung Meng Hui ch'eng-li ch'ien ti Sun Chung-shan (Canton, 1957).

inaugural meeting, he managed to collect some thirteen thousand Hong Kong dollars in contributions for his cause.[11] Encouraged by this, Sun hurried back to Hong Kong, established contact with the members of the Fu-jen Wen she, and was able to persuade them to amalgamate their two movements into the Hong Kong Hsing Chung Hui, founded on 21 February, 1895.[12] This amalgamation, however, was purchased at a price, as Yang Ch'ü-yün, by dint of his seniority in age and his influence among both the European and Chinese communities of the Colony, was elected chairman instead of Sun.[13] Nevertheless, Sun Yat-sen continued to be the most active revolutionary among them during this period. On 6 October, 1895, a branch of the Hsing Chung Hui was secretly established in Canton,[14] and at the end of that year, when Sun, Ch'en Shao-pai and Cheng Shih-liang went to Japan, another branch was established in Yokohama.[15]

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[11] Lo Chian-lun, op.cit. I, 51-3; Sun Wen "T'an-hsiang-shan Hsing Chung Hui ch'eng-li hsüan-yen" in Ch'ai Te'keng et.al. (ed) Hsin-hai ko-ming (Shanghai, 1957) hereafter quoted as HHKM I, 85-6; and Feng Tzu-yu in Lo Chia-lun (ed) Ko-ming Wen-hsien (Tawiwan, 1953-5) III, 331-72 gives a list of the Hsing Chung Hui members during 1894-1903.

[12] Hao yen-p'ing, "The abortive cooperation between reformers and revolutionaries" in Harvard University, Papers on China XV (1961) 92; Feng Tzu-yu, Hua-ch'iao ko-ming kai-kuo shih 5-8; Hsueh Chun-tu, op.cit 28-30; Ku Yen-shih, Chung-kuo mi-mi she-hui shih (Shanghai, 1927) 138-41; Sun Wen, "Hsiang-Kang Hsing Chung Hui Hsüan-yen" in HHKM I, 86-9; Hu Ch'ü-fei, Tsung-li shih-lüeh 22-5; Ch'en Hsiung, Min-tsu ko-ming wen-hsien (Taipei, 1954) 14-17 gives the regulations. Evidence shows that only three members of the Fu Jen Society joined the Hong Kong Hsing Chung Hui: Yang, Hsieh and Chou Chao-chün; see Wang Hsing-jui, op.cit. 37. The literary society probably disintegrated after this split.

[13] For accounts of the Sun-Yang conflict, see Hsüeh Chün-tu, op.cit. 27; Ch'en Shao-pai, op.cit. 95b; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih I, 7; Chou Lu, op.cit. IV, 1226; Tse Tsan-tai, op.cit. 8, where he claims that "...in the spring of 1895... we joined hands with Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his friends and established the Hing Chung Whui (Hsing Chung Hui) revolutionary party." In V.V. Chow, "Sun Yat-sen's fatherhood of New China" in United China Magazine (Shanghai) Oct. 1933, 424, it was even suggested that Sun was only Yang's secretary at this period.

[14] Lo Hsiang-lin, op.cit. 79; Feng Tzu-yu, Hua-ch'iao ko-ming Kai-kuo shih 4; Wu Shou-i, op.cit. 78-9.

[15] Feng Tzu-yu, Hua-ch'iao ko-ming tsu-chih shih-hua, 7-8.

By the end of 1895, the revolutionary movement was thus launched. To try its effectiveness it was now necessary to take direct action against the Ch'ing government. In this respect, it is interesting to note the sources from which support came from the revolutionaries, at this early stage of their activities.

The single most important source of moral, and what was more necessary, financial support for the Chinese revolutionaries came from the overseas Chinese communities, the hua-ch'iao. We have seen how conditions in Hong Kong, when contrasted with affairs in their homeland, caused the educated Chinese there to talk of political reforms. This same pattern was repeated in Singapore, another British colony not far from the Chinese mainland, as well as other areas of the world where Chinese communities flourished. It is not difficult to see why the Chinese abroad should prove such ready sympathisers of the revolutionary movement. The Chinese were traditionally bound by ties of home and family, so that when for reasons of trade or other means of livelihood they had to settle in foreign lands, they invariably continued to keep in close contact with affairs in China. But with the spread of education, and as the hua-ch'iao became aware of the modern political institutions in their host countries, they began to grow dissatisfied with the machinery of government in their native land. Sometimes, they were victims of ill-treatment or discrimination by the countries in which they were domiciled, and this further led to the desire for a strong home government, which would afford some form of protection or prestige for her expatriates. There was disagreement as to how China was to be transformed; but the dream of China as a great

nation was fairly universally held among the overseas Chinese.[16] This was to be sucessfully exploited by the revolutionaries.

On the other hand, the attitude of the Chinese government towards these emigrants had been one of disapproval, if not hostility, throughout the Ch'ing period.[17] However, with the opening of treaty ports in the mid-nineteenth century, and the growth of European imperialism resulting in the operation of the coolie trade, the Chinese government began to interest itself in the welfare of the Chinese abroad. Furthermore, when the government found itself in a position of weakness, as it did by the late 19th century, it began to recognise the value of the wealth and loyalty of its overseas subjects. Then it was important to win back their allegiance and detach them from the influence of the foreign governments which played host to them. One case in point was the situation in Singapore. In 1896, the Governor, Sir Charles Mitchell, suggested to the Colonial Office that the British government of the Straits Settlements should occasionally confer cetain degrees of rank, or other marks of honour, analogous to those conferred by the Emperor of China, on deserving Chinese residents. His argument was that the Chinese government, through its Consulate-General in the Straits, had been increasingly active in

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[16] See L. E. Williams, Overseas Chinese Nationalism (Illinois, 1960) 44-5; G. W. Wang, Short History of the Nanyang Chinese (Singapore, 1959) 27; S. Spector, "The Chinese in Singapore" in M. Fried (ed) Colloquium on Overseas Chinese (New York, 1958) 23; T. Mende, The Chinese Revolution (London, 1961) 25-6; Ch'en Li-te, Chung-kuo hai-wei i-min shih (Shanghai, 1946) 62-71; V. W. Purcell, The Chinese in Southeast Asia (London, 1951) 354; Ta Chen, Emigrant Communities in China (London & New York, 1939) 273-4.

[17] Ch'en Li-te, op.cit. 52-4, argues that after the Ch'ing conquest in 1644, Cheng Ch'eng-kung, still loyal to the Ming dynasty, began drifting abroad and rallying followers against the Manchus. Hence successive Ch'ing rulers tended to discourage intercourse with the outside world. Also see Sir George Thomas Staunton (trans.) Ta Tsing Leu Lee (London, 1810) 543-4 for clauses denouncing emigrants. Williams, op.cit. 146-7 shows that the laws were injurious to overseas Chinese interests, for they made possible the extortion by local officials of the wealth of returning emigrants. On the whole though, such legislation tended only to discourage emigration, and did not altogether curb it.

obtaining subscriptions from and selling titles to the Chinese, and he felt that it needed some overt signs of recognition for their services to the British government to prevent the "feelings and tendencies of their Chinese subjects from gravitating Chinawards."[18]

The Colonial Office tended at first to look with favour on the proposal, though they decided to solicit the opinion of Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, a former Governor of the Straits.[19] Smith condemned the scheme, and he evidenced the situation in the Dutch Indies, whereby the appointment of a leading Chinese settler as "Captain China" led to oppression and misery for those under his charge.[20] He refused to believe that the customary sale of buttons and other marks of honour had any political significance for the Chinese in the Straits, and could not advise the British government to enter the competition with the Chinese government in this method of winning the loyalty of the Chinese subjects.[21] The matter was thus shelved. But it does illustrate that by the end of the 19th century, the Chinese abroad had become important both to the waning Manchu Dynasty as well as to the revolutionaries plotting its overthrow.

Chinese residents in various overseas countries were often an essential element in the budding revolutionary movement. Frequently they were men who for obvious reasons were not Hsing Chung Hui members. In Hong Kong, one outstanding instance was of Ho Ch'i (later Sir Kai Ho Kai) a doctor and a barrister-at-law, who had represented Chinese interests on the Colony's

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[18] Mitchell to C.O. 6 Oct. 1896, enclosing a lengthy report by the Assistant Protector of Chinese, Mr. G. T. Hare, CO 273/218

[19] C. P. Lucas Minutes on the above; and C.O. to Smith, 12 Nov. 1896, ibid For an account of Sir Cecil C. Smith, see F. Swettenham, British Malaya (London, 1929) 245-50.

[20] See Williams, op.cit. for a description of the system, 124-9

[21] Smith to C.O. 3 Dec. 1896, CO 273/223

Legislative Council since 1890. From time to time he wrote reform articles in the local English press, and in 1895 helped the organization of the Hsing Chung Hui's first revolutionary attempt, though he was never a member of the Society.[22] In Singapore, there were wealthy merchants like Ch'en Chu-nan, Chang Yung-fu and Lin I-shun, who were particularly useful for Sun Yat-sen when he later made frequent trips to the Straits Settlements.[23] In Hawaii one of Sun's earliest adherents and the first to join the Hsing Chung Hui was Teng Yin-nan, who donated a large sum of money to the revolutionary society by selling a farm.[24] And in Yokohama, Feng Chin-ju, a well-to-do shopkeeper, was a founder member of the Japanese branch of the Hsing Chung Hui.[25] These are some typical instances of the class of men who had the resources as well as the kind of political consciousness which drew them to the activities of the Hsing Chung Hui.

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[22] The activities of Ho are described in G. B. Endacott, A History of Hong Kong (London 1958) 249-50; Dr. J. M. Atkinson, "Health and Hospitals," in A. Wright (ed) 20th Century Impressions of Hong Kong, Shanghai and other Treaty Ports of China (London, 1908) 264; Woo Sing-lim, The Prominent Chinese in Hong Kong (Hong Kong, 1937) II, 2; Hsiao Kung-ch'uan, Chung-kuo Cheng-chih ssu-hsiang shih (Shanghai, 1946) 795; Li Shu-fan, Hong Kong Surgeon (London 1964) 24-5; B. Harrison (ed) The University of Hong Kong, the first fifty years (Hong Kong, 1962) 11-2; Lord C. Beresford, The Break-up of China (London, 1899) 218 contains a letter to him from Ho on reform. See also China Mail 12 Mar. 1895. p. 2 col. 6-7 for his reform article. Also see the North China Herald of 19 Feb. 1897, p.290, and 26 Mar. 1897, p. 539 for accounts of his career. In March 1897 Ho accepted the post of legal adviser and secretary to Wu T'ing-fang, the newly appointed Chinese Minister to Washington.

[23] For their brief biographies, see Chou Lu, op.cit. IV, 1620; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih I, 249, III, 183-6; Wang Gung-wu, "Sun Yat-sen and Singapore" in Journal of the South Seas Society XV, Part 2, 58; Huang Fu-luan, Hua-ch'iao yü Chung-kuo ko-ming (Hong Kong, 1955) 68.

[24] Accounts of Teng are given in Wu Shou-i, op.cit. 77; Feng Tzu-yu, op.cit I, 65-6.

[25] Feng Tzu-yu, Hua-ch'iao ko-ming Kai-kuo shih 42; Ch'en Shao-pai, op.cit. 96b-97; Wu Shou-i, op.cit. 88.

The many foreign missionaries working in China also gave much moral encouragement and even practical assistance to the revolutionaries. For a long time, it was a point of missionary endeavour in China to work for the "awakening" of that country, and in the slogans of the young revolutionaries they seemed to see that possibility being realised. There is no denying that it was through the educational efforts of the missionaries in introducing Western culture and thought that many literate Chinese became familiar with the political institutions of the West, and as a result of intelligent analytical studies they began to regard their own Chinese institutions with dissatisfaction.[26] It is not clear however, whether some of the foreign missionaries were entirely cognisant of the full implications of the aspirations of "Young China";[27] there was certainly a tendency to ignore the distinction between the constitutional reforms advocated by K'ang Yu-wei,[28] and the more radical political changes urged by Sun Yat-sen. An exception was Timothy Richard (1845-1919) the Baptist missionary and General Secretary of the Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge (established in 1887)

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[26]See the chapter on the stimulus of missions and their influence on Chinese society and thinking, in G. Lanning, Old Forces in New China (London, 1912) 18-24; also see Hsieh Sung-kao and Yü Mu-jen, Chu-chiao ti yen-chiu (Hong Kong, 1954) especially the Appendix, 1-11, on Christianity in China; Dr. D. T. Huntingdon, "The Chinese Revolution in relation to mission work" in The East and the West XII, (1914) 137-44; A. H. Smith, The Uplift of China (London, 1914) 141-56; A. Mitchie, China and Christianity (Shanghai, 1892) 64-70; N. Bitton, The Regeneration of New China (London, 1914) 89-90. A useful account of the British missionary movement in China and its effect on policy-making in London is given by Edmund S. Wehrle, Britain, China and the Anti-missionary Riots, 1891-1900 (Minneapolis, 1966) 3-18.

[27]The term was freely used in most 19th and early 20th century writings to encompass an undefined group, consisting on occasion of foreign-educated students, missionary converts, reformers, or revolutionaries. The practice is particularly evident in missionary works.

[28]See Chapter III.

which was responsible for much of the Western literature made available to the Chinese people during the 19th century.[29] Richard was able to see quite early the determination with which Sun was working for the destruction of the Manchu dynasty, and soon refused to cooperate with him, to devote himself more energentically to K'ang Yu-wei's reform movement.[30] Yet Sun Yat-sen seemed to enjoy special popularity among most of the other missionaries who came into contact with the Hsing Chung Hui activists. This was perhaps not unusual due to his being under missionary influence ever since his school days in Hawaii and Hong Kong. Among his close missionary friends was the Rev. Frank Damon

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[29]The Society was later called the Christian Literature Society for China. For the work of Richard in China, see W. E. Soothill, Timothy Richard of China (London, 1924) 173-80; Wu Chao-kwang, International Aspects of the missionary movement in China (Baltimore, 1930) 71-3, 225-7; P. A. Cohen, "Missionary approaches: Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard" in Harvard University, Papers on China XI, (1957) 29-62; E. W. P. Evans, Timothy Richard (London, 1945) 9-95; A. J. Garnier, A maker of modern China (London, 1945) 31-86; T. Richard, Forty-five years in China (New York, 1916) 218-28; and B. Reeve, 73-90, Timothy Richard, China Missionary, Statesman and Reformer (London 1912) 73-90. The Peking and Tientsin Times, leading article of 7 Mar. 1896, p. 2.

[30]Richard first met Sun in 1896 in London. When Sun began to expound on the tyranny and corruption of the Manchu government, and insisted on their being replaced by a Chinese ruler, Richard endeavoured to show him that there had been splendid Manchu officials and rascally Chinese ones, and that the mere transfer of rule from Manchu to Chinese would have been futile. Reform and not revolution was needed for China. But Sun was adamant. In 1900 Richard met Sun again in Yokohama, and the latter was still busy with planning a revolution. Richard decided that they would have to part company, "as I believed in enlightening the government by literature. I saw he had never forgiven the Manchus for imprisoning him in the Chinese Legation in London." See Richard, op.cit. 350-1, and Soothill, op.cit. 323. His attitude was further made clear in a letter to a Chinese correspondent of 18 Feb. 1903: "As to reform in China there are two views ... one revolutionary and one reformatory. I do not belong to the former as I have seen such terrible disasters arising from violent measures. But I do all I can in favour of shedding light on all problems of real interest to China... "Richard, op.cit. 350, Soothill, op.cit. 303-4; Wu Chao-kwang, op.cit. 228. Richard's relations with the constitutional reformers is discussed in Chapter III.

of the American Congressional Church in Hawaii who furnished him with three hundred Hong Kong dollars for his journey to Hong Kong in 1883.[31] In that year, Sun was baptised while he was at the Government School in Hong Kong by the Rev. C. R. Hager; and during his medical training at Canton, he met again his former tutor the Rev. John L. Kerr of the Anglo-American Mission, who managed to have his tuition fees specially reduced.[32] From these and others, both foreign and Chinese, Sun Yat-sen was able to count on much missionary support for his revolutionary activities; this was to be important when the Hsing Chung Hui embarked on its programme of uprisings against the Chinese government.[33]

However, the Hsing Chung Hui, by virtue of the size as well as character of its membership, was hardly equipped with the fighting power or the technical knowledge for raising insurrections; for this reason, the Society had to resort to the support of the various secret societies prevalent in South and Central China. Briefly, those active in the Yangtze provinces were off-shoots of the White Lotus Society while those operating in areas South of the Yangtze as well as among the overseas Chinese communities (mainly emigrants from the South) were branches of the San Tien Hui or Triads.[34]

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[31] Lu Tan-lin, Ko-ming Shih-t'an (Nanaking, 1947) 92; C. Glick and Hong Sheng-hwa, Swords of Silence (New York and London, 1947) 3.

[32] See Lu Tan-lin, op.cit. 92-3; Lin Tzu-hsün, Kuo-fu hsüeh-shuo yü Hsi-fang wen-hua (Taipei, 1953) 175; L. Sharman, op.cit. Appendix B. "Some personal reminiscence by C. R. Hager"

[33] Lu Tan-lin, op.cit. 91-120 describes the missionary influence on revolutionary activities and lists all the missionaries who gave assistance to the movement up to 1911. See also Lo Hsiang-lin, Kuo-fu yü Ou-Mei chih yu-hao (Taipei, 1951) 30

[34] Accounts of the origins, objectives and activities of these two main secret society groups can be seen in Lo Erh-k'ang, T'ien-ti-hui wen-hsien-lu (Chung-king, 1943) 61-8; Hsiao I-shan, Chin-tai Chung-kuo mi-mi she-hui shih-liao (Peking, 1935); 4b-10b; G. Schlegel, Thian Ti Hwui (Batavia, 1866) 1-19; J. C. de Korne, "Sun Yat-sen and the secret societies" in Pacific Affairs VII, 4 (1934) 425-33; W. Stanton, The Triad Society (Hong Kong 1900) 2-38.

It is worthy of note that the secret societies played a major part in the revolutionary programme only during the attempts before 1905. After this date students and soldiers came into prominence. Nevertheless they were an essential feature of the early insurrections. The society men were generally paid well for services, so that the remuneration probably accounts for their enthusiasm to work with the revolutionaries. By tradition, the secret societies were anti-dynastic, and for those who were merely concerned with feathering their own nests, a political label such as was furnished by the Hsing Chung Hui could perhaps give their societies weight and prestige.[35] Consequently, into the revolutionary ranks came all sorts and conditions of men, "the dreamers of dreams, lewd fellows of the baser sort, men who were out for plunder and the spoils of war, place-seekers as well as patriots."[36] With this motley crew the Hsing Chung Hui perpetrated its first armed rising against the Chinese government with the proposed seizure of Canton. Since this attempt was mainly organized and armed in Hong Kong, the event therefore directly involved the British government for the first time in the Chinese revolutionary movement.

The Governor of Hong Kong at this time was Sir William Robinson (1891-1898) who had little sympathy to spare in his dealings with the Chinese government. He was convinced that the Chinese harboured an innate hatred of Europeans, especially among the gentry and literate classes, and he felt that any generosity in British policy would be regarded as a sign of weakness or

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[35] See John Lust, "Secret Societies and the Revolution of 1911", unpublished paper presented at the Research Conference on the Chinese Revolution of 1911, New Hampshire, 1965; G. A. Floris, "Chinese Secret Societies" in Contemporary Review, Vol. 193 (1958) 320.

[36] N. Bitton, op.cit. 13.

fear. He blamed the non-interference of Britain in the recent Sino-Japanese war as the chief cause of a deterioration in the position of Britain in China.[37] Such a man could hardly be expected to pursue a policy calculated to placate the neighbouring Chinese government when it came to the question of an anti-dynastic movement being developed in the Colony. Chinese efforts to demand the handing over of political offenders, it will be seen, were vigorously rejected by Robinson. Yet in the case of Sun Yat-sen, whose activities in the Colony could not have escaped Robinson's notice, rather than having to wait for a Chinese request which was certain to be forthcoming, Robinson took the unexpected stop of ordering his banishment from the Colony even without the previous sanction of the Colonial Office. The 1895 Canton uprising and the subsequent case of Sun Yat-sen were thus the first trials of British policy towards the growth of a Chinese revolutionary movement on British soil.

The Hong Kong Hsing Chung Hui began planning this revolutionary attempt in March, 1895, the leading figures in the operation being Sun Yat-sen, Yang Ch'ü-yün, Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai and Huang Yung-shang, a wealthy merchant. In addition, they managed to obtain the active support of two foreign journalists in the Colony: Chesney Duncan was the editor of the Hong Kong Telegraph whose pro-revolutionary writings soon led to a warning from the Colonial Secretary who charged that his articles "amounted to incitement of the Chinese to revolt against a government with which Great Britain was on friendly terms."[38]

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[37] Robinson to C.O. (confidential) of 6 Aug. 1895, in F.O. 17/1263; his views were expressed again in Robinson to MacDonald of 1 June, 1896 (confidential) in CO 129/372. See also G. B. Endacott, op.cit. 215-27 for an account of his administration.

[38] Tse Tsan-tai, op.cit. 8

Thomas Reid was the editor of the China Mail, who later reminded Hsieh of his role in the Chinese revolutionary movement:[39]

> "...and I personally am proud to think that I was the first to support the movement publicly in the China Mail when other English newspapers in China and the Far East scoffed at the movement."

It was in fact the China Mail which first announced in March 1895 that the "Reform Party" was planning action against the Ch'ing government, and called on Foreign Powers not to support the Manchus.[40] Whether or not this early announcement was advantageous to the revolutionaries would soon be seen.

Both Reid and Duncan were present at some of the conspiratorial meetings at the Hsing Chung Hui headquarters, and they promised to rally the support of the British government and the English people. It was decided to raise the rebellion in Canton, beginning with an attack upon public buildings as well as on the foreign settlement; the latter however, was only meant as a feint to draw off the attention of the city authorities.[41] The public officers in the city were then to be captured, the Treasury and Arsenal seized, and with Canton in their possession the revolutionaries would march Northwards. The day chosen was the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, (26 October 1895)

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[39] Letter to Tse from London, dated 9 Oct. 1912, in Tse Tsan-tai, op.cit. 33. See also accounts of some foreign sympathisers in Chou Lu "I-wei Kuang-chou ch'i-i" in HHKM I, 225; Lo Hsiang-lin, Kuo-fu chih ta'hsüeh shih-tai, 85-90, Kuo-fu yü Ou-Mei chih yu-hao 78-9; Feng Tzu-yu, ko-ming i-shih I, 18; Chou Lu, Chung-kuo Kuo-min-t'ang shih-kao III, 655.

[40] See the China Mail of 12 March, 1895, and 16 March, 1895.

[41] Professor Frederic Wakeman, of the University of California at Berkeley, has suggested to the author that designating the attack on the foreign settlement as a "feint" could have been a ploy used by the revolutionaries to soothe whatever alarm the foreign journalists might have felt. On the other hand, the revolutionaries could also have actually planned it as a way of using Cantonese antiforeignism to summon support both against the Manchus and the imperialists. From other evidences of the motives of the revolutionaries, however, at least in this early stage of the movement, the author feels that the first interpretation is probably closer to the truth than the second.

which was the Chung-yang or "Mid Autumn" festival. It was Chinese custom to visit ancestral graves on this day, and there was bound to be a great deal of activity in Canton with numerous Cantonese entering the city. The circumstances seemed ideal for an insurrection. The date having been fixed, Ho Ch'i undertook to draft a proclamation and the outlines of a Provisional Government to be established in China if the uprising proved a success.[42]

It is interesting to note that when an election was held on 10 October, to select the President of the Provisional Government it was again Yang Ch'ü-yün who proved to be a stronger force in the Hsing Chung Hui: though Sun Yat-sen won by the number of votes, Yang was able to cause Sun's "resignation" and have himself elected instead.[43] In fact, at this stage of the movement, both Sun Yat-sen as a revolutionary leader and the Hsing Chung Hui as a revolutionary organization left much to be desired. But Sun was to gain much experience and prestige from the consequences of the Canton fiasco, while the amateurish handling of the insurrection could be seen from the events of October, 1895.

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[42]Feng Tzu-yu, op.cit. I, 10, 26-37; Tse Tsan-tai, op.cit. 9; P. Linebarger, op.cit. 211-3; Sun Yat-sen, "My Reminiscences" in The Strand Magazine XLIII, 255 (1912) 301-7; Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 57-8; Hsüeh Chün-tu "Sun Yat-sen, Yang Ch'ü-yün and the early revolutionary movement" in Journal of Asian Studies, 311. The North China Herald of 1 Nov. 1895, p. 745, col. 1-2 explains that Canton was chosen by the revolutionaries because the city was near the coast and its possession would afford them easy means of obtaining arms and ammunition, and with its wealthy population there was plenty of the sinews of war for future operations. Another advantage was that Canton had more foreign-educated men than any other city or province of China, who mostly wanted the opportunity to rebel against a regime which looked down upon this class of people.

[43]Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 59; Ch'en Shao-pai, op.cit. 95b; Feng Tzu-yu, op.cit. I, 7; Hsüeh Chün-tu, op.cit. 312. See Tse Tsan-tai, op.cit. 9 in which he contends that his forced resignation had greatly displeased Sun, and that it had "always rankled in his breast".

To begin with, the conspiracy had none of the secrecy that was surely a prerequisite of successful revolution. Besides the premature announcement of their plans by Reid in the China Mail, news of an imminent uprising in Canton spread early in October as far as Shanghai and Tientsin; even the number of men involved and their fighting capacity and armaments were known.[44] This meant that both the Hong Kong government and the Chinese authorities in Canton were on their guard that a plot was underfoot.

Early in October, the Hong Kong Police received information that large shipments of firearms were going into the nearby Portuguese colony of Macao, from thence into China, and that the local Triads were endeavouring to engage recruits in the Colony. Meanwhile the Chinese officials in Canton were also making investigations, and on 26 October, the scheduled day of the uprising, five men were arrested, including Lu Hao-tung, and some letters and telegrams captured at the Canton Hsing Chung Hui headquarters. This caused the Hsing Chung Hui to postpone the insurrection by two days. On the 27th, further information of a suspicious character reached the Hong Kong authorities, and prompt action on this by the Hong Kong Police led to the frustration of the whole revolutionary attempt. On that day, Inspector Stanton of the Hong Kong Police Force learned that some four hundred coolies and secret society men were engaged in the Colony as "soldiers" and were to proceed to Canton that evening on the steamer "Pow-an," there to await further instructions. The men revealed that they had been recruited by Yang Ch'ü-yün and Chu Ho[45]

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[44] See the North China Herald of 4 Oct. 1895; and Peking and Tientsin Times of 19 Oct. 1895, in which the paper scoffed at the possibility of a full-scale rebellion being organised.

[45] In the British accounts the name appeared as Chu Ho, but it was probably the same man known as Chu Ch'i in other works.

as government soldiers at $10 per month, and each had received $1 passage money for the journey to Canton. They were searched for arms, but nothing was found, and the Hong Kong authorities could not therefore prevent them from boarding the ship. Later that night, however, Inspector Stanton discovered that a large quantity of arms had recently been purchased at a shop in Hong Kong, and that Yang was again named as the person responsible. He further found that the arms had left in the same ship as the coolies, stored in five barrels labelled as cement. This information was duly relayed to the Canton Customs authorities through the British Consulate.

By this time, it was obvious to the revolutionaries that their plot had completely miscarried, and they dicided to abandon all plans. The leaders Sun Yat-sen, Ch'en Shao-pai and Cheng Shih-liang fled from Canton, while Yang Ch'ü-yün also left Hong Kong secretly. Meanwhile, as the "Pow-an" arrived at Canton on the 28th, it was met by a comparatively small party of Canton "Braves" sent by Li Chia-cho, the Superintendent of the Shameen Contingent; about fifty of the coolies were arrested, the rest soon dispersing among the crowd. In all three men, including Lu Hao-tung, were beheaded.[46] It was generally considered among revolutionary contemporaries that the failure of the uprising was due to the betrayal of the plot by Chu Hsiang, brother of Chu Ch'i (Chu Ho) who fearing for his brother's safety, revealed the

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[46] Tse Tsan-tai, op.cit. 10; T'ang Leang-li, The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution (London, 1930) 23; Sun Yat-sen, Kidnapped in London (Bristol, 1897) 28; Feng Tzu-yu, op.cit. II, 26-7; Chung-hua Min-Kuo Kai-Kuo ch'ien ko-ming shih I, 17-9; Ch'en Shao-pai, op.cit. 96-96b, also given in HHKM I, 56-7; Chou Lu, op.cit. in HHKM, I, 225-34; the China Mail of 28 Oct. 1895, p.3, col. 2; North China Herald of 1 Nov, 1895,p. 745, col. 1-2.

conspiracy to Li Chia-cho in Canton.[47] However, there could be no doubt that the Hong Kong government and its energetic police force had the most to do with the breaking of the plot.[48] In this, the Hong Kong Police were also indebted to a betrayal by a coolie, So Ku, recruited for the insurrection who, as was probably true for all the others, genuinely believed that he was to be a government soldier in Canton. Then on the afternoon of the 17th, he discovered the nature of the task they were to perform in Canton, and decided to inform the Hong Kong authorities, meanwhile refusing to participate in the movement any longer.[49]

Thus fizzled out the first revolutionary attempt of Sun Yat-sen. The event in itself was perhaps not significant,[50] but in the investigations connected with it, the British Government discovered aspects of the revolutionary movement which were to have repercussions on the whole question of British policy toward the Chinese revolutionaries.

For instance, when the Hong Kong authorities cooperated with the Canton government in tracing the five barrels of firearms sent from Hong Kong, they were eventually found to have been lodged partly in the Chapel of the American Presbyterian Mission in Canton city, and partly at the house

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[47] Ch'en Shao-pai, op.cit. 114-114b; Wu shou-i, op.cit. 81-7; Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 60-1. A defence of Chu by the Rev. Ou Feng-chih is given in Feng Tzu-yu, Chung-hua Min-kuo kai-kuo ch'ien ko-ming shih I, 23-6.

[48] When the Colonial Office first heard of the attempted uprising from the Consul-General at Canton, some consternation was felt, and Chamberlain thought that the Hong Kong authorities ought to have known that the Colony was being used as headquarters for the plot, and to have informed the Canton authorities. Robinson was immediately asked for a report on the proceedings. It was only when his reply came that the action of the Hong Kong government was made known. It was strange that Robinson did not think of furnishing an account of the coup before he was asked for it. See C. P. Lucas and Chamberlain Minutes on F.O. to C.O. of 11 Dec. 1895, in CO 129/269.

[49] Robinson to C.O., 11 March, 1896, in CO 129/271.

[50] Lord Salisbury's reaction on first learning of it was that it was "A mad plot enough, but it takes very little to upset the Chinese equilibrium." His minute on Brenan to F.O. of 4 Nov. 1895, in FO 17/1249.

of a British subject by the name of Crick. Byron Brenan, (1894-1927) the British Consul-General at Canton, felt that serious attention must be drawn to the first fact, that Christians were implicated in the affair, and even worse, that the Chapel of the American Mission should have been the centre of the movement in Canton, "an unpleasant circumstance which cannot but seriously injure the Christian missions in this province."[51] As for the British subject involved, the Foreign Office discovered that he had earlier been deported from the Sandwich Islands because of complicity in political troubles there, and that he had lived in Canton for the past three months. During this time he had been seen frequently in the company of Sun Yat-sen, but his part in the revolutionary movement was not known until he left Canton suddenly after the abortive uprising, when empty cement casks, as well as dynamite, cartridges, fuses and chemicals used in the making of explosives were found hidden in his home.[52] He was only one example of the kind of foreign adventurers who were attracted to the Chinese revolutionary cause, as will be seen again in later developments.

Another aspect which came to light consequent upon the Canton events was how widespread and well-supported the movement already was in the South. Brenan was informed by Li Chia-cho that when the plot could be sifted to the bottom, many influential men and high military officials would be involved.[53]

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[51] Brenan to F.O. 4 Nov. 1895, FO 17/1249. See also Lu Tan-lin, op.cit. 111-2, where a Chinese Presbyterian Minister, the Rev. Tsou Tou-shan, is described as having given refuge to the revolutionaries in his bookstore-chapel in Canton.

[52] Brenan to O'Conor, 12 Nov. 1895, enclosed in Brenan to F.O. 18 Nov. 1895, in FO 17/1249.

[53] Brenan to F.O. 4 Nov. 1895, ibid.

For this reason, the Canton officials soon rested satisfied with having forestalled an attempted insurrection, and would not continue with a searching investigation for fear that "inconvenient information" would be found.[54] This doubtless explains the almost half-hearted way Li Chia-cho undertook the suppression movement despite the early information relayed from Hong Kong: for example, there was hardly a sufficient force of men to meet the steamer as it arrived in Canton with the four hundred coolies, thus allowing most of them to disperse. Brenan feared that should another such attempt be launched against the government, the Viceroy of Canton, T'an Chung-lin would not have been able to suppress it, as he did not seem to realize the gravity of the situation on this occasion.[55] One plausible explanation is that T'an was perhaps being deceived by his subordinates, who were afraid of being held responsible for the dangerous state of affairs.

But fears of a renewed attempt were indeed rife early in 1896. Once again it was the English press which gave the first warnings.[56] Thereafter rumours and stories began to be widely circulated, and there were apprehensions of another attempt during the Chung-yang festival in 1896 (15 October).[57] There were suspicious circumstances: anonymous warnings were sent to the foreign Consuls in Hong Kong in February, and in September, Dr. Knappe,

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[54] Brenan to F.O. 18 Nov. 1895, ibid

[55] Brenan to F.O., 4 Nov. 1895, ibid. See also Admiralty to F.O. of 30 Dec. 1895, in FO 17/1256, in which the Vice-Admiral A. Buller on the China station, reported that there was still much uncertainty as to what extent the movement was really suppressed. He proposed that H.M.S. "Pigmy" should still be kept anchored off the Canton Settlement for the present.

[56] North China Herald of 12 Feb., 1896, p.238, col. 1

[57] See Consul Fraser's intelligence report, enclosed in F.O. to C.O. of 12 Dec. 1896, in CO 129/274. Fraser proposed to apply for a gun-boat at Canton should further disturbing information reach him.

the German Consul, was alerted to expect a visit from Sun Yat-sen, with whom he was personally acquainted.[58] Large consignments of firearms had been leaving Hong Kong and finding their way into Canton, despite the frequent seizures and raids made by Li Chia-cho. The Canton Viceroy was also reported to have expressed extreme uneasiness about the situation, and repeatedly urged the Hong Kong government for surveillance of the arms trade. In March, he requested the extradition from Hong Kong of one of Sun's followers, but it was refused by Governor Robinson for lack of proof.[59]

At about the same time, Consul Brenan in Canton also received reports that Sun Yat-sen was due to return from Hawaii with a fresh supply of money to renew his revolutionary activities. Quite unexpectedly, Sir William Robinson promptly issued an order of banishment against Sun (and Chu Ho) in his absence; Robinson considered "This man's presence in the Colony so very undesirable."[60] The order was issued on 4 March, 1896, based on the 1882 "The Banishment and Conditional Pardons Ordinance", and was to be effective for five years.[61] Sun was in Japan when he learned of this British move against him. He wrote to the Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong, J. H. S. Lockhart:[62]

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[58] Canton intelligence report, enclosed in F.O. to C.O. of 16 June, 1896, in CO 129/274, and again in F.O. to C.O. of 12 Dec. 1896, ibid

[59] ibid

[60] Robinson to C.O., 11 March 1896, in CO 129/271

[61] The ordinance is given in Sir John Carrington (ed) The Ordinances of Hong Kong (Hong Kong, 1904) I, 370-1. Acounts of the banishment are also given in Endacott, op.cit 227; Wu Shou-i, op.cit. 83; Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 61-2, Lu Tan-lin, op.cit. 5. A copy of the banishment order is enclosed in Black to C.O. of 18 May, 1898, in CO 129/282.

[62] His letter and Lockhart's reply are found in Black to CO. ibid

> "I was told by some good authority that the Hong Kong government have outlawed me on account of my attempt to emancipate my diserable countrymen from the cruelty of the Tartar yoke. I had asked many of my English friends in London whether this is the case. They said such is not an English law and usage. But my Chinese friends in Hong Kong answered the question in affirmative. Will you be kind enough to tell me whether it is true or not? If it is the case I will appeal it to the English public and the civilized world."

Lockhart's reply, dated 4 October, 1897:

> In reply to your letter, undated, I am directed to inform you that this government has no intention of allowing the British colony of Hong Kong to be used as an asylum for persons engaged in plots and dangerous conspiracies against a friendly neighbouring Empire, and that in view of the part taken by you in such transactions, which you euphemistically term in your letter "emancipating my miserable countrymen from the cruelty of the Tartar Yoke" you will be arrested if you land in this Colony under an order of banishment issued against you in 1896.

Surprising as it was, Robinson's precipitate move in banishing the two men could not be seen in the light of a swing to a friendlier attitude towards the Chinese government on his part. On the contrary, seeing that Sun and Chu's complicity in the Canton coup was so obvious, and that the question of their surrender was bound to be taken up by the Chinese authorities, he decided to forestall them by taking action first, and to win the gratitude of the Canton Viceroy to boot. As far as the extradition arrangements between Hong Kong and Canton were concerned, Robinson remained firm in his stand that no assistance was to be given to the Chinese government without some corresponding privilege in return.

Shortly after this, the Canton Viceroy T'an Chung-lin attempted to include sedition among the offences for which the extradition of Chinese from Hong Kong might be arranged.[63] In a private note to the new British

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[63] Extradition relations between Hong Kong and the Chinese government were based on article 21 of the Treaty of Tientsin, 1858, which were subsequently amended in 1889 to become the "Chinese Extradition Ordinance, Ordinance 7 of 1889". See Carrington, op.cit. I, 658-67.

Consul-General at Canton, E.H. Fraser, (1859-1922) dated 11 March, 1896, the Viceroy stated:[64]

> "...Hong Kong and Macao afford refuges for criminals. When Sun Wen and Yang Chu Yan had absconded to Hong Kong, your Majesty's servants asked the British Consul to assist in their capture promising a big reward as recompense for their extradition. But the Consul deliberately prevaricated, declaring that by foreign law no one to be beheaded could be given up and asking Your Majesty's servant to declare what penalty they would be sentenced to. Your Majesty's servant replied that it was impossible to fix the sentence before the criminal was put on trial and the evidence taken.
>
> Soon after, news came that Sun Wen had fled to Nagasaki, and the matter was dropped.
>
> Kwangtung has since the execution of Lu Hao-tung and two others on 7 November been tranquil, and rumours have also ceased. For the past few months nothing has been heard of seditious assemblies in Hong Kong and Macao. Yet revolutions always come when most unlooked for, and the only other course is to see that the Civil and Military authorities take precautions as opportunity offers."

Fraser seemed to regard the Viceroy's appeal with a certain amount of sympathy, suggesting to Robinson that the extradition law as it stood engendered much ill-feeling between the British and the Chinese officials, considering that sedition was regarded by the Chinese as the most heinous of crimes against the Emperor, and he felt that a refusal to conciliate them by extraditing anti-dynastic conspirators would surely be regarded as a proof of unfriendly feelings on Britain's part.[65] Robinson however, refused to take the conciliatory line suggested by Fraser. He pointed out that it was a principal of English law that extradition should not be granted for

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[64]Fraser to MacDonald, 25 April, 1896, enclosed in Robinson to C.O. of 7 July, 1896 (Confidential) CO 129/372. On 1 November, 1895, the Chinese government had requested the extradition of five men involved in the Canton coup, but Robinson had refused the application because the offence alleged against the men was of a political nature. See Brenan to F.O. of 18 Nov. 1895, in FO 17/1249.

[65]Fraser to MacDonald, 9 April, 1896, in Robinson to C.O. of 7 July, 1896, CO. 129/372.

political offences. Robinson deprecated making concessions to the Chinese government without a substantial "quid pro quo" being exacted from them in return, reiterating again his stand that in his experience any free grant of favours to the Chinese government would be regarded only as a sign of weakness. The "Quid pro quo" he had in mind was the extension of the boundaries of Hong Kong.[66] It is interesting that the British Minister at Peking during this time was Sir Claude MacDonald, a man very much of Robinson's way of thinking when it came to dealing with the Chinese,[67] and MacDonald readily endorsed Robinson's suggestion.[68]

Reactions from the British government at home however, were very different.[69] C. P. Lucas, an Undersecretary at the Colonial Office, thought that it was "objectionable" to suggest that political offenders should be extradited to the Chinese on condition that Hong Kong should be given more territory. His view was shared by an official at the Foreign Office, who was surprised that either Robinson or MacDonald should have raised such a question in the first place. Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, on the other hand, perhaps troubled by the knowledge that Hong Kong had become a centre of Chinese revolutionary activities, declared: "I have no scruples in the matter at all. It would be a capital bargain for us to get more territory and to lose a few of the scoundrally leaders of secret societies who harbour in Hong Kong. But it might raise a Parliamentary row or foreign complications, and should therefore, be considered from the point of view of expedience alone."

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[66] Robinson to MacDonald, 1 June, 1896, (confidential) enclosed in Robinson to C.O. of 7 July, 1896, ibid. His hopes were realised in 1898 when the New Territories were leased from the Chinese government.

[67] See Chapter III

[68] MacDonald to Robinson, 17 June, 1896 (confidential) enclosed in Robinson to CO of July 7, 1896, ibid.

[69] The following Minutes from C. P. Lucas, Wingfield, Lord Salisbury and Chamberlain are all attached to Robinson's despatch, ibid.

To this came a strong protest from Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary. "It would be monstrous to hand over political prisoners to any one - most of all the Chinese, who would crucify them or cut them in pieces. We want and must have more territory, but I would rather go to war with China for it than agree to such a bargain." In the end, Chamberlain's views held, and Robinson was told of the "grave objections" to his proposals, which could not be entertained under whatever conditions.[70] The acquisition of an extension to the Colony had thus to wait till the general "scramble" of 1898.[71] But it is worthy of note that in 1896, Lond Salisbury had put on record even momentarily, an aaggressive attitude towards the question. Such an energetic stand would not be seen again in his subsequent handling of the Chinese revolutionaries.

It has been seen that in 1895 Sun Yat-sen's position in the Hsing Chung Hui and as a revolutionary leader had not amounted to much. The abortive attempt on Canton had brought his name to the attention of the British government;[72] but it was in 1896 and his kidnapping by the Chinese Legation in London that caused the British government to be directly involved in his activities, and as a consequence Sun gained the necessary prestige and

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[70] C.O. to Robinson, 4 Sept. 1896, in CO 129/274.

[71] See F.O. Correspondance of 1895-99 on the question of the extension of Hong Kong. Also see China Association, Annual Report 1898-9, Appendix F, "Extension of Hong Kong"; North China Herald of 3 Dec. 1897, p. 1028, col. 2; and leading article in the Times of 5 April, 1899, p.7, col. 2-3.

[72] In 1895, Brenan described him as "a person of some intelligence, and well known in Hong Kong. He professed to be a Christian, but the missionaries with whom he had to do doubted his sincerity. He had studied medicine under English doctors in Hong Kong and took much interest in western science," in Brenan to F.O., 18 Nov. 1895, FO 17/1249. A correspondent in the Times of 24 Oct. 1896, p.6, col. 2-3 asserted that Sun had guided the revolutionary movement from within the yamen of the Provincial Treasurer, showing that Sun was therefore "no ordinary obscure conspirator."

publicity to boost his role in the Hsing Chung Hui organization as well as to make him into an internationally known Chinese revolutionary.

After the failure of the Canton attempt, Sun sought refuge in Japan, and in Yokohama established a branch of the Hsing Chung Hui.[73] He then left Japan in the spring of 1896 and travelled to Hawaii and the United States, where he established contact with the Triads among the Chinese communities and tried to preach revolution to them.[74] His activities in America, however, were watched closely by agents of the Manchu government, who were still determined to bring him to justice. Accordingly, when he left America for England in September 1896, this information was telegraphed to the Chinese Minister in London, Kung Chao-yüan.[75] Thus from the day of his arrival in London, Sun's movements were vigilantly spied on by detectives in the employ of the Chinese Legation. Finally, in a reckless move, the Legation attempted to capture and smuggle him back to China for execution. The dramatic event lasted from 11 to 23 October, and had it not been for the prompt interference of the British Foreign Office, the venture would undoubtedly have succeeded.

On the morning of the 11th, Sun was walking near the Legation quarters in Portland Place when he was accosted by a Chinese from his native district of Canton. Sun was engaged in conversation, during which he was half-persuaded and half-forced to enter the Legation. Once inside, the door was locked and Sun was led upstairs and confined in a room. Later he was visited by Sir Halliday Macartney, the English Councillor at the Legation, and Teng ch'in-ch'i,

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[73]Sun's activities in Japan are given in M. B. Jansen, op.cit. 162; Feng Tzu-yu, Hua-ch'iao ko-ming kai-kuo shih 42; Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 63-4; Ch'en Shao-pai, op.cit. 96b-97; Sun Yat-sen, Fundamentals of National Reconstruction (Taipei, 1953) 28.

[74]Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 65.

[75]Macartney to Sanderson, in Sanderson's Memo to F.O. of 22 Oct. 1896, FO 17/1718; also see Wu Shou-i, op. cit. 92-100; Lo Chia-lun. op.cit. I, 66-7.

an offical interpreter, and told of the fate awaiting him.[76] From his prisoner's room Sun tried throwing weighted messages through the window and bribing the servants. In the end he succeeded in gaining the sympathy of the English housekeeper at the Legation, Mrs. George Cole, and through her the campaign for Sun's rescue was initiated.[77]

In this, he also owed his life to two of his English friends from his university days. Dr. James Cantlie had been Sun's teacher at the Hong Kong College of Medicine, and had shown interest in his medical as well as political activities. In Hawaii in March 1896, he had met Sun and given him his London address, to which Sun had accordingly reported after his arrival in London. After this they were in constant contact, and Cantlie had already noticed Sun's long absence from his lodgings.[78] Dr. Patrick Manson was also a practitioner and teacher at the Hong Kong College of Medicine.[79]

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[76]This was according to Sun's statement of 23 Oct. 1896, in FO 17/1718; also in Lo Chia-lun, op.cit, I, 67-8; Sun Yat-sen, Kidnapped in London 40-61; A reliable account of the whole kidnapping incident is compiled by Lo Chia-lun, Chung-shan hsien-sheng Lun-tun pei-nan shih-liao K'ao-ting (Shanghai 1930). Sir Halliday Macartney came out to China in 1860 with his regiment, and began a life-long connection with China. In 1862 he resigned from the army to join the Chinese service, having become closely attached to Li Hung-chang. He was appointed secretary with the first Chinese Embassy to England in 1877. He never returned to China, but remained in Europe helping to organize the diplomatic relations of the Chinese government. From 1877-1906 he was first secretary, and then councillor and English secretary to the Chinese Legation in London. See D. Boulger, The Life of Sir Halliday Macartney (London & New York, 1908).

[77]Sun Yat-sen described in detail his frame of mind during his imprisonment in a letter to the Rev. Ou Feng-chih, in Lu Tan-lin, op.cit. 101-3.

[78]Dr. Cantlie's regard for Sun is described in N. Cantlie and G. Seaver, Sir James Cantlie (London, 1939) 97: "... Of some twenty-four men who presented themselves I was most attracted by Sun. Himself a Christian and the son of a Christian, he at once arrested my attention by his gentleness of character, his earnestness in study, and by his behaviour as a gentleman in College and in private life. He was the model and the example to the other members of the classes, and then as throughout his whole career, he attracted by his personality both teachers and fellow-students...."

[79]See P. H. Manson-Bahr and A. W. Alcock, The Life and Work of Sir Patrick Manson, (London, 1927); and Sir Ronald Ross, Memories of Sir Patrick Manson (London, 1930) for his work as a specialist in tropical medicine.

On the night of 17 October, Mrs. Cole dropped an unsigned note in the letter-box of Dr. Cantlie, informing him of Sun's plight. The note read:[80]

> "There is a friend of yours imprisoned in the Chinese Legation here, since last Sunday. They intend sending him out to China, where it is certain they will hang him. It is very sad for the poor man, and unless something is done at once he will be taken away and no one will know it. I dare not sign my name, but this is the truth, so believe what I say. Whatever you do must be done at once or it will be too late. His name, I believe, is Lin Yen Sen."

Alarmed, Cantlie contacted Manson, and together they decided on the course of action. The next day, which was a Sunday, Cantlie went to see Sir Halliday Macartney at his home, but was told he was out of town for six months. On Monday, Cantlie went to the Foreign Office and communicated a letter containing three cards sent to him since the 17th by Sun through the good services of Mrs. Cole:[81]

> "I was kidnapped into the Chinese Legation on Sunday and shall be smuggled out from England to China for death. Pray rescue me quick."
>
> "A ship is already charter (sic) by the Chinese Legation for the service to take me to China and I shall be locked up all the way, without communication to anybody. Oh, woe to me!"
>
> "I was pulled into the Chinese Legation by two China men outside the street near the door on Sunday 11 October. Before I got in they each held a hand on my side urging me to go in to have a talk with them. When I got in they locked the front door and force (sic) me to go up stair (sic) and put me in a room and locked me up since that day.
>
> They intend to smuggle me out of England if they can, otherwise murder me by some way in the Legation.
>
> I was born in Hong Kong and went back the interior of China about 4 or 5 years of age, as legally a British subject. Can you get me out by that?"

The Foreign Office was now faced with an unprecedented situation. On the one hand, Sun Yat-sen was after all a declared rebel against the Chinese

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[80] Cantlie and Seaver, op.cit. 103.

[81] Cantlie to Sanderson of 19 Oct. 1896, in FO 17/1718; see also J. Cantlie and C. S. Jones, Sun Yat-sen and the awakening of China (London, 1912) 60-3; Sun Yat-sen, 62-106.

government, whose claim to British citizenship was soon proved to be false.[82] On the other hand, if the circumstances were as Cantlie described, the matter was a grave one. What the Foreign Office feared was the possibility of a great public outcry if the event became known, and if it was found that though informed, the government had done nothing to stop what was obviously an illegal proceeding.[83] This aspect was particularly imminent, as Cantlie's letter contained a veiled threat. "If the legation continues to deny Sun's presence, I see no other way of bringing the matter home than to hand the facts to the press for publication."[84] A decision was thus made by Francis Bertie and J. A. Campbell, Assistant Under-secretary and Under-secretary respectively at the Foreign Office, to station a detective outside the Chinese Legation in case they attempted to move Sun or get him out of the country; meanwhile, to have a "discreet police officer" speak with George Cole, porter at the Legation. To this Lord Salisbury telegraphed his approval from his country home at Hatfield.[85]

By the next day, Sun's presence and his confinement in the Legation was confirmed as a result of the police officer's investigations. Bertie decided that it was a "scandal" and that the British government could "scarcely let the matter go on."[86] Sir Thomas Sanderson, (1841-1923), Permanent Under-secretary, also felt that Sir Halliday should be summoned to the Foreign Office to be warned of the consequences of such an abuse of diplomatic privilege, which could result in the delivery of the Chinese Minister of his passport and even criminal proceedings against Macartney himself.[87] Lord Salisbury however,

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[82] Sanderson Memorandum to Salisbury, 22 Oct 1896, FO 17/1718.
[83] Bertie to Home Office, 19 Oct. 1896 (pressing) ibid.
[84] Cantlie to F.O. 19 Oct. 1896, ibid.
[85] Bertie Minutes of 19 Oct. 1896, ibid.
[86] Sanderson Minutes of 20 October, 1896, FO 800/1.
[87] ibid.

strongly opposed Foreign Office intervention. He felt that the police should continue to keep the Legation watched, to prevent anyone being transported against his will. "But beyond this we have no interest. I do not think it is our business to advise Sir Halliday Macartney."[88] This reluctance to become involved was representative of Lord Salisbury's stand throughout this kidnapping incident; it was part of his over-all policy of caution and even diffidence which was so frequently a criticism of his administration.[89] After much insistence from the other officials in the British government, who felt that the Chinese Legation's violation of British territorial integrity could not be tolerated, Salisbury sanctioned a strong demand for Sun's release. Even then, he was reluctant to follow this with a protest to the Peking government, as was expected of him.

Meanwhile, pressure was increasing on the Foreign Office to take immediate action. On 21 October, Inspector F. Jarvis of the Metropolitan Police had an interview with McGregor of the "Glen Line" steamers, and the latter stated that they had been approached by the Chinese Legation respecting the transport of a lunatic to China. But their steamer "Glen-fang" had been delayed and could not sail till mid-November, so the negotiations had fallen through.[90] On 22 October, Sanderson discovered that the two doctors had sent a letter to the London Times office containing a full account of the incident, which was provisionally withheld from publication pending action by the government. He feared that "if the affair is published there may be a considerable scandal, particularly if we have done nothing."[91] From the Home Office came information

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[88] Salisbury Minutes, ibid.

[89] Supra Chapter I.

[90] Murdock to Sanderson, 24 Oct. 1896, FO 17/1718.

[91] Sanderson Memo to Salisbury, 22 October, 1896, ibid.

that on the same day the two doctors had made an application for a writ of habeas corpus to the High Court, requiring the Chinese Legation to bring up a Chinese subject alleged to be illegally detained at the Chinese Legation. The affidavits by the two doctors were found to be genuine, and the Home Office urged Lord Salisbury to take action and secure the release of Sun Yat-sen.[92] Also on the 22nd, and despite Salisbury's previous injunctions against it, Sanderson and Bertie arranged an interview with Macartney, who was found to have been inside the Chinese Legation all this time. Macartney was reminded of the seriousness of the situation, and urged to release Sun immediately. Macartney procrastinated, saying that they were awaiting instructions from the Tsungli-yamen.[93]

Only then, when matters seemed to have reached a deadlock did Salisbury agree to step in, and sent a formal note demanding Sun's release to the Chinese Minister:[94]

> "The detention of this man against his will in the Chinese Legation is, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, an infraction of English law which is not covered by, and is an abuse of, the diplomatic privilege accorded to a foreign representative. I have therefore, the honour to request that Sun Yat-sen may be at once released."

This must have come as a surprise to Macartney, who was perhaps in the best position to recognise that so long as Lord Salisbury did not come out with an official ultimatum, there was hope of the Chinese Legation

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[92] Judge E. Digby (Home Office) to F.O. 22 Oct. 1896, (confidential and pressing) ibid, and Judge R. S. Wright (High Court) to F.O., 23 Oct. 1896, (confidential) ibid.

[93] Sanderson Memo, 23 Oct. 1896, ibid.

[94] F.O. to Kung Ta-jen, 22 Oct. 1896, ibid.

being able to delay and perhaps get Sun out of the country. But with this notice being served he realized that the Chinese government must step down to avoid a serious Anglo-Chinese crisis. Accordingly, at a second meeting with Sanderson on 23 October, Macartney declared that he was going to liberate Sun on his own responsibility, and then telegraph the Tsungli-yamen that he was doing so. However, the extent to which he was free to act entirely on his own could be gauged, when he was made to follow this with the request that the British government should give an assurance that Sun should be vigilantly watched should he return to Hong Kong and attempt to organize treasonable conspiracies in China again. The fact of Hong Kong being the constant headquarters of revolutionaries was once more emphasized. Sanderson refused to promise anything: certainly not as a condition for Sun's release.[95] By this demand, Macartney was in fact only testing the ground for a formal application from the Chinese Minister which came a few days later:[96] That afternoon, he called at the Foreign Office with the information that the Chinese Minister was releasing Sun Yat-sen immediately.[97]

It was thus a diplomatic triumph for the Foreign Office and a defeat for the Chinese government, accomplished without undue strain on the relations between the two countries. Yet had it not been for the urgency

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[95]Sanderson Memo, 23 Oct. 1896, ibid.

[96]Chinese Minister Kung to F.O., 26 Oct. 1896, FO 17/1286.

[97]Sanderson Memo, 23 Oct. 1896, in FO 17/1718; See also the Times of 23 Oct. 1896; London and China Express of 30 Oct. 1896, and North China Herald of 30 October, 1896, for accounts of his release.

attached to the matter by Foreign Office officials such as Bertie and Sanderson, Britain's handling of the situation would have shown much more lack of leadership and determination than it had. Even so, Lord Salisbury had his doubts. He admitted that "all had gone very well," but "I have a lingering doubt as to Webster's law - but as we have accepted it, we must go through with it, and make a protest at Peking. Perhaps we might link it on to the Burmese negotiations."[98] Thus even when the Chinese Government had given in so readily to his intercession on Sun's behalf, Salisbury still did not feel confident enough to make his protest to Peking a matter of importance in itself. It was true that during most of the negotiations in this Sun case, he was at Hatfield, and the fact of his physical presence away from the centre of the storm might have caused his somewhat indifferent attitude. When he did decide to instruct Sir Claude MacDonald in the matter, the latter was asked not to make a communication to the Tsungli-yamen unless they brought up the matter. Then he was to point out that the action of the Chinese Minister in London was a gross abuse of the privilege enjoyed by a foreign representative, which would not be tolerated in any European capital, and of which Her Majesty's Government had a grave reason to complain. Perhaps to soften the blow a little, Salisbury then added that if necessary, MacDonald was authorised to promise that it was the wish of the British government do do what was consitutionally in their power to discourage and prevent conspiracies on British territory directed against the Chinese governor or its officers.[99]

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[98]Salisbury Minutes, 23 Oct. 1896, in FO 800/1. By Webster's law he probably referred to Sidney Webster, in his Extradition - the right to demand it; the enlargement of its jurisdiction, and the improvement of its methods (New York, 1890). See J. A. S. Grenville, Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy (London. 1964) 132, for an account of the Burmese negotiations.

[99]F.O. to MacDonald, 26 Oct. 1896, in FO 17/1718.

On the other hand, and on the same day that MacDonald was sent his vaguely-worded instructions, the Chinese Minister in London delivered a note to the Foreign Office, making very definite demands that the British authorities of Hong Kong should prevent the Colony being made a base of secret society and other anti-dynastic movements:[100]

> "The proximity of Hong Kong to the mainland making the island an especially advantageous station whence these movements can be directed and a convenient place of retreat and refuge for the conspirators and other evilly disposed persons in case of the discovery of miscarrige (sic) of their machinations, I have the honour to request Your Lordship to be so kind as to cause the local authorities to exercise for the present, special vigilance over any persons known or supposed to belong to these illegal organizations."

The Foreign Office felt that "If this is intended as a retort in connection with the Sun incident, it is feeble."[101] In their reply, they reminded Kung of the important role Hong Kong had played in the discovery of the Canton plot in 1895, and that the governor had banished two of the ring-leaders on his own initiative.[102]

Now that the Chinese government had shown a disposition to renew this question of Hong Kong as a revolutionary base, Sanderson felt that on their part the British government must also pursue further their protest at Peking regarding the kidnapping case. Sanderson pointed out that this was the most desirable in view of the fact that Sir Halliday Macartney had approached him some weeks before Sun's arrival in London to enquire whether a Chinese subject who had escaped to England could be surrendered on demand for trial and punishment in China under the Extradition clause in the Convention of March 1894, with Burma and Tibet. Sanderson had told him that it was plainly not possible.[103] Sanderson now suggested a "very strong remonstrance to the Chinese Government."[104] This was endorsed by

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[100] Kung to F.O., 26 Oct. 1896, in FO 17/1718.
[101] F.O. minutes on above.
[102] F.O. to Kung, 31 Oct. 1896, ibid.
[103] Sanderson Memo, 22 Oct. 1896, FO 17/1718.
[104] ibid.

Lord Salisbury: "We must protest to prevent any modification in our international rights exercising against us by inference from our default."[105] But he made it clear that personally he was just as indifferent to the incident as he had been at its outset. "...otherwise the matter affects our interests very little."[106] Consequently MacDonald was again instructed, this time with a more definite message to convey to the Tsungli-yamen. He was to represent to the Chinese government:[107]

> "that in the absence of any treaty stipulation giving the Chinese representatives in England extraterritorial jurisdication over Chinese subjects, the detention in the Legation of one even though undoubtedly a subject of China, is a serious abuse of the privileges and immunities granted to Foreign Representatives. Her Majesty's Government feel that if such acts were persisted in or repeated, it would justify the use of whatever measures necessary for the release of the captive, and to demand the immediate departure of the persons responsible. They trust therefore, that the Chinese government will give strict instructions to the Minister in London to abstain carefully from any acts of the kind in future."

When this message was duly delivered, MacDonald noted that there was no attempt on the part of the yamen to defend the action of the Chinese Legation,[108] thus suggesting that the whole incident must have arisen out of an over-enthusiasm on the part of Kung Chao-yüan in the exercise of his duties, encouraged perhaps by Sir Halliday Macartney. In a private conversation with MacDonald, even Li Hung-chang seemed anxious to know if Lord Salisbury considered Macartney to blame for the kidnapping.[109]

In fact, in a final analysis of the drama, it was indeed Macartney who came under the heaviest fire. He laid himself open to suspicion from

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[105] Salisbury minutes, 18 Nov. 1896, ibid.

[106] ibid.

[107] F.O. to MacDonald, 16 Dec. 1896, ibid.

[108] MacDonald to F.O. 9 Mar. 1897, ibid.

[109] ibid. MacDonald had told him that there was nothing to indicate such. But in Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. 18-20, it is clear that Macartney was responsible for the hiring of a detective to tail Sun from the day he arrived in London, and it was to Macartney and not to the Chinese Legation that the detective made his reports.

the beginning, when Dr. Cantlie tried to see him, and was told that he was away. Yet it was soon revealed by the Legation staff that he had been indoors all the time, and that he had given instructions to his servants that he would be at home to nobody.[110] His account of how Sun came to be taken into the Legation also differed substantially from the information which reached the British government. He insisted that Sun had entered the building voluntarily on Saturday, 10 October, with the intention of spying on the Legation. After a brief conversation with a Cantonese on the staff, he left, and they then discovered that some sheets of a Chinese translation being prepared for Macartney were missing. So when Sun came again the next day, the 11th, he was detained.[111] The most inculpating factor against Macartney's story was, of course, the fact that he had made enquiries and been informed that the extradition of a criminal from England to China could not be granted. Sir Thomas Sanderson felt that it was plainly Macartney's duty to inform the Chinese Minister that he could not be a party to such illegal proceedings, and if they had persisted, he must resign and inform the Foreign Office of what was taking place. Even Lord Salisbury agreed that his part in it was "a very ugly story."[112] In general, it was observed that Macartney had failed to offer any lucid explanation of the object of detaining Sun, if it was not to smuggle him illegally out of the country. If he had known that extradition was impossible, he should have

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[110] Cantlie to F.O. 19 Oct. 1896, FO 17/1718.

[111] His account as told to Sanderson, in Sanderson memo of 23 Oct. 1896, ibid; The North China Herald of 4 Dec. 1896, p.971, also carries a statement from Macartney. See the Times of 26 Oct. 1896, p.8 col. 4 where in a letter he attacked the press for believing Sun's version of the story and not his. Cantlie and Seaver, op.cit. 101, assert that on that morning Sun was on his way to church with the Cantlie family. See also Boulger, op.cit. 466-7 for a defence of Macartney.

[112] Sanderson Minutes, 24 Oct. 1896, in FO 800/1.

applied for a warrant for the man's arrest and proceed against him in the ordinary way. The public outcry was strongest when it was found that an Englishman should have been a party to, if not the prime-mover, in this high-handed proceeding.[113]

As for Sun Yat-sen, the incident afforded him fame and popularity among most of the English-speaking countries. The publicity made him into a professional revolutionary, and he was quick to capitalize on it by releasing a statement to the English press in which he reaffirmed his intentions of delivering his country from oppression:[114]

> "Will you kindly express through your columns my keen appreciation of the action of the British government in effecting my release from the Chinese Legation. I have also to thank the press generally for their timely help and sympathy. If anything were needed to convince me of the generous public spirit which pervades Great Britain, and the love of justice which distinguishes its people, the recent acts of the last few days have conclusively done so. Knowing and feeling more keenly than ever what a Constitutional Government and an enlightened people mean, I am prompted still more actively to pursue the cause of advancement, education and civilization in my own well-beloved but oppressed country."

If Sun did not openly ask for British help in his revolutionary cause in this statement, he did so in an article written soon after this in the London Fortnightly Review. In it, having asserted that nothing would do for China but the complete overthrow of the Manchu regime, he made it clear that he

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[113] North China Herald, 11 Dec. 1896, p. 1012, col. 3; London and China Express 30 Oct. 1896, p. 915, col. 2; See Boulger, op.cit. 468-9 where in defending Macartney's actions, he points out the penalties of service in a foreign government, particularly that of China; and the unworthiness of Sun Yat-sen for the stir made on his behalf by public opinion. In the House of Commons, it was announced that official responsibility must rest with the Chinese Legation, in FO 17/1718 and reported in the London and China Express of 19 Feb. 1897, p. 163, col. 2.

[114] His letter appeared in the Times on 26 Oct. 1896, p. 8 col. 4; the London and China Express on 30 Oct. 1896, p. 918, col. 2; See also Sun Yat-sen, Kidnapped in London 133; Ch'en Hsiung, op.cit. 266. Sun was also reinstated as chairman of the Hong Kong Hsing Chung Hui shortly after this.

hoped to be able to depend on the cooperation of England in the achievement of his object. He was careful to point out that events in China were capable of producing "serious European complications."[115]

Meanwhile, the publicity attached to Sun revived the question of his banishment from Hong Kong. It was little noticed when first put into effect in 1896; but now when Britain had so clearly defended its policy of protecting Chinese political refugees on British soil from the Chinese government, questions began to be raised as to the inconsistency of first driving him out of a Crown colony, only to shelter him again in England. The outcry was raised by a British soldier, Roland Mulkern, Secretary of the Friends of China Society, who wrote to the London Standard:[116]

> "The government of the Crown Colony of Hong Kong has banished Sun Yat-sen from the island, and has assumed the right to hand over political offenders to the tender mercy of the Tartar government of China. This is surely foreign to the spirit in which political offenders seek refuge in Britain, and as the laws of the Crown Colonies are identical with British laws and acts, it would seem that the Hong Kong government has acted unconstitutionally."

This was echoed by another London daily: "If Sun had rights as a political refugee in England, does he lose those rights in an English Crown Colony?"[117]

This press campaign inevitably led to questions being asked in the House of Commons. Mr. M. Davitt (Mayo,S) wanted to know the specific grounds for Sun's banishment in 1896, the offence he was charged with, if there was any act against the laws of the Colony, and whether the decree of banishment was going to be revoked.[118] On receiving notice of these questions, the Colonial

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[115]The article was written in conjuction with a Mr. Edwin Collins. "China's present and future: the Reform Party's plea for British benevolent neutrality" in Fortnightly Review, LXI, N.S. (1897) 424-40.

[116]His article was reprinted in the Evening News on 11 Jan. 1898, and seen in FO 17/1718; also in London and China Express of 14 Jan. 1898, p. 40, col. 2, Sun's friendship with Mulkern is given in Lin Tzu-hsün, Kuo-fu hsüeh-shou yü Hsi-fang wen hua (Taipei 1953) 141.

[117]Quoted in London and China Express of 14 Jan, 1898, ibid.

[118]Parliamentary Debates LVI, April 1898, 219; the questions are also in CO 129/286 and in translation in Wu Shou-i, op.cit. 84-6.

Office found that in fact they had little specific knowledge of the circumstances of Sun's exile. Aside from mentioning that he had banished Sun and Chu Ho in his despatch of 11 March, 1896, Robinson gave no account of the terms of the order, nor was there a statement of the grounds on which it was issued. It was a most unsatisfactory proceeding, and for sheer lack of information the Colonial authorities began to doubt if the suspicions of Sun being involved in a coup against Canton were justified. There was some confusion as to whether the order should now be revoked.[119] In the end, Chamberlain decided that they had better ask Hong Kong for a complete explanation; meanwhile the House was supplied with a brief answer that "Sun Yat-sen left Hong Kong in 1895, at a time when information had reached the Colonial government that he was implicated in certain proceedings against the Chinese authorities in Canton. Hearing that he was likely to return, the Governor in Council issued an order of banishment against him. He was not charged with, or convicted of, an offence against the laws of the Colony. I am not aware whether the order is still in force, or whether an application has been made for its revocation, but I will cause inquiries to be made."[120]

These proceedings in the British Parliament were not unnoticed by the Chinese Legation. Soon after the debates were published, the new Chinese Minister, Lo Feng-lu[121] called at the Foreign Office, and referring to the

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[119] Johnson Minutes on Parliamentary questions, CO. 129/286.

[120] Chamberlain Minutes, ibid; Parliamentary Debates, ibid; C.O. to O.A.G. Hong Kong, 12 April, 1898, in CO 129/286.

[121] Lo became Chinese Minister in May, 1897. His appointment was greeted with enthusiasm in England, in that he was known to have had considerable experience in dealing with foreigners, spoke several European languages fluently, and was a protege of Li Hung-chang. See accounts of him in Sir Valentine Chirol, Fifty Years in a Changing World, (London 1927) 186-7; the North China Herald of 11 Dec. 1896, p. 997, col. 2-3; Bertie Memo, 26 Nov. 1896, in FO 17/1290, and MacDonald to F.O. 2 Dec. 1896, in FO 17/1278. Lo did not seem to get on very well however, with Sir Halliday Macartney: See Boulger, op.cit. 472-3.

question of Sun's banishment, expressed the hope that no attempt would be made to revoke the order.[122] This request was passed on to the Colonial Officials who were unable to commit themselves by any sort of promise until they have had more information from Hong Kong.[123] However, when Hong Kong's reply did arrive, it contained only correspondence between Sun and the Colonial Secretary early in 1897, together with the fact of the banishment order being of five years' duration, and that there had been no application for its revocation.[124] By this time, Robinson had left the Colony, and the Officer Administering the Government could not be expected to know much more about the incident than what his predecessor had left on files. Responsibility for the confused state of things must therefore, still be traced to Robinson.

This lack of information did not dispel the Colonial Office belief that the only incriminating fact against Sun was his own statement in his letter, regarding the emancipation of his countrymen from the Tartar yoke. They were not yet convinced of his guilt in the 1895 Canton coup.[125] Accordingly there was again some difficulty in meeting the challenge posed by Mr. Davitt in a series of questions in the House on 14 July, 1898. Davitt required to know of the promised information from Hong Kong, whether the Chinese government had desired the expulsion of Sun, and if their request had been complied with, whether it was doen with the sanction of the Colonial Office, and finally suggesting that since no breach had been made against British law, the order should be withdrawn.[126] The reaction of the Colonial Office

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[122] F.O. to C.O. 26 April 1898, (confidential) in CO 129/277.

[123] C.O.Minutes on above.

[124] Black to C.O. 18 May, 1898, in CO 129/282.

[125] C.O. Minutes on above.

[126] Parliamentary Debates LXII, 76; and in CO 129/286.

to this demonstrated again the extent to which the government at home could sometimes become dangerously ignorant about the motives and policies of its distant colonial administrators. Johnson, an Undersecretary, summed up the dilemma:[127]

> "I do not see how these questions can be very satisfactorily answered, since the whole proceedings were very loose; and the Banishment Ordinance No. 8 of 1882 under which this man was banished is of a most arbitrary character, which might rouse much criticism if its contents were known to some members of the House of Commons. The Order of Banishment does not specify the real grounds on which Sun Yat-sen was banished."

It was at first suggested that in reply to the questions regarding a Chinese application for Sun's expulsion, it might be explained that Hong Kong's doing so was in deference to the Chinese government's view that Sun's presence in the Colony was dangerous to the peace of Canton.[128] This however, met with Chamberlain's opposition, who finally drafted what he termed a "safe" reply:[129]

> "No application was made by the Chinese government for his banishment, and he left the colony prior to the issue of the order. I see no reason to interfere with the temporary prohibition of his residence in Hong Kong."

The Chinese Minister was accordingly informed of Chamberlain's decision,[130] and in a "sweet letter"[131] to the Foreign Office Lo expressed his thanks for this "renewed proof of the friendly disposition of Her Majesty's Government towards China, and (I desire to) express the hope that during the currency of the Order no application will be entertained having for its object the return of this notorious creator of sedition to Hong Kong..."[132]

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[127] Johnson Minutes on the Parliamentary questions, ibid.

[128] ibid.

[129] Chamberlain Minutes, ibid.

[130] F.O. to Lo Feng-lu, 25 July, 1898, FO 17/1718.

[131] Remark of Fiddian at F.O., ibid.

[132] Lo Feng-lu to F.O., 10 Aug. 1898, ibid.

On such an apparently satisfactory note ended Sun Yat-sen's first direct encounter with British government policy. It was surely not Britain's intention to offer unlimited protection for all Chinese political refugees on British territory, whether at home or in the Colonies; and it certainly could not be regarded as a sign of approval for their movements. Lord Salisbury would have been the first to reject this assumption. Nevertheless, British prestige and the responsible observance of international law had to be upheld. For these considerations, Sun Yat-sen found himself official and personal champions during 1895-1898. In 1898 however, a reform movement of a different kind erupted in China, and Sun Yat-sen was temporarily forgotten as British attention turned to events concerning K'ang Yu-wei and the constitutional reformers.

CHAPTER III

THE REFORM MOVEMENT OF 1898

The reform movement in China which was to culminate in the dramatic "Hundred Days" of 1898 had its beginnings as early as in 1895. That was the fateful year of China's defeat by Japan in the Sino-Japanese War. Hitherto, China's foreign wars and their results had affected the Empire but little. This time, however, when defeat came at the hands of a former vassal-state, traditionally regarded as culturally China's inferior, it was a shattering blow to the pride and complacency of the scholar-official class, and they determined to urge that the government should undertake reforms. Thus began a general movement among the educated section of the population. The outstanding personality among them was the Cantonese scholar K'ang Yu-wei (1858-1927).

K'ang had received a classical education which eventually won for him the coveted degree of chin-shih. His interests, however, extended to the reading of the works of a wide range of European and Japanese liberals from which he was to derive inspiration for his later reform ideas. In 1887, at the age of twenty-nine, K'ang journeyed to South and Central China, and at one point passed through Hong Kong. He was much impressed by the orderliness and efficiency of the British-administered Colony, and the experience also helped to shape his ideas for administrative reforms in China. In 1888 K'ang was in Peking for an examination. He was so distressed by the corruption and disorganisation of the central government system, as compared with that of the British Colony, that he drafted and presented a petition to the throne. He urged the need for reforms in China, and attributed the

growing strength of Japan to the Meiji reorganisation. His petition was ridiculed, and not presented to the Emperor. Disillusioned, K'ang returned to Canton, where he began to operate a school to spread reform ideas among the young.[1]

By 1895, with news of the defeat at the hands of Japan, K'ang was not the only intelligent Chinese who felt that the effort to press for reforms should be seriously taken up. When it was known that the Chinese Government was arranging to make peace with the Japanese, there was a stir among the many chu-jen who were in Peking for the chin-shih examinations. A number of memorials urging immediate reforms were submitted by various scholars, but to no avail. Then K'ang conceived the idea of writing a memorial and having it jointly signed by several others; in this endeavour K'ang was aided by his fellow provincial Liang Ch'i-ch'ao (1873-1929) who had also come for the examinations.[2] They obtained over one hundred names for this.

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[1] An excellent treatment of K'ang Yu-wei and his life is done by his maternal grandson, Lo Jung-pang, K'ang Yu-wei, a Biography and a Symposium (Arizona, 1967); see also K'ang Yu-wei, Nan-hai K'ang Hsien-sheng tzu-pien nien-p'u (Peking 1958) I, 7b-9b, also given in Chien Po-tsan, et. al. (ed) Wu-hsü pien-fa (Shanghai 1953), hereafter quoted as WHPF, IV, 107-120; M. E. Tsur, "K'ang Yu-wei" in Hankow Club Collected Papers, University of Hong Kong Library, XXXIX (1915); R. Howard, "K'ang Yu-wei, his intellectual background and early thought," in A. F. Wright (ed) Confucian Personalities (Stanford, 1962) 294-316; M. E. Cameron, The Reform Movement in China, 1898-1912 (Stanford 1931) 23-4; Hsiao Kung-chüan, "The case for constitutional monarchy: K'ang Yu-wei's plan for the democratization of China" Monumenta Serica, XXIV (1965)

[2] For accounts of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, see J. R. Levenson, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China (Cambridge, Mass. 1953) 15-33; Yang Fu-li, "Liang Ch'i-ch'ao nien-pu" in WHPF IV, 171-8; C. Y. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, 1872-1949 (N. Carolina 1966) 212-228; Chang Peng-yüan, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao yü Ching-chi ko-ming (Taiwan, 1964) 47-78; Ting Wen-chiang, Liang Jen-kung Hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'ang-pien ch'u-kao (Taiwan 1959) 23-30

Three Hunan scholars also found some tens of names to put on their memorial, and together with K'ang they went again to the Censors' yamen asking them to submit the memorials for them. This move was further followed by scholars from other provinces doing the same.[3] Having waited for some days and seeing no report of their memorials in the Peking Gazette, they decided to combine their efforts into one grand petition from all the provinces, to protest against the forthcoming treaty, urge the transfer of the capital, and ask for urgent reform measures. This was the Wan Yen Shu (Ten Thousand Word Letter) and K'ang was selected to draft the document. It claimed to have twelve hundred signatures, though the actual names given in the document totalled only six hundred and four.[4] As the treaty with Japan was to be ratified at Chefoo on 8 May, they decided to present the memorial at the Censorate on 4 May. In actual fact, the Treaty of Shimonoseki was ratified on 2 May, and the memorialists thus failed to make their protest in time. This grand memorial met the same fate as all the other previous ones: the Censors disapproved of its radical tone, and the petition was consequently ignored.[5]

Disappointed by the obstacles in the way of working through official channels, K'ang then turned to a literary campaign to spread reform ideas. With a number of other scholars and young officials, he decided to

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[3]They were from Kwangtung, Fukien, Szechwan, Kiangsi, Kueichou, Kiangsu, Hupeh, Shensi, Kansu, Kwangsi, Chihli, Shantung, Shansi and Honan.

[4]See the North China Herald of 6 Dec. 1895, p. 949, col. 1-3.

[5]Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, Wu-hsü cheng-pien chi (Yokohama 1899) 1-2, also given in WHPF I, 249; Wu Tse, K'ang Yu-wei yü Liang Ch'i-ch'ao (Shanghai 1948) 9-13; Wen Ching, The Chinese Crisis from Within (London 1901) 51-54; M. E. Cameron, op. cit. 26; Wang Ch'i-chü (ed) "K'ang Yu-wei tsou-i erh-shih-chiu p'ien" in WHPF II, 123-269, giving 29 of the memorials K'ang had submitted to the throne.

recruit the support of the enlightened, educated classes. Their first step was to form study societies, (hsüeh-t'ang) which ostensibly aimed at the promotion of learning, but in reality became reform societies with political objectives.

In September, 1895, the Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui (known as the Hanlin Society to foreigners) was founded in Peking, under the leadership of K'ang Yu-wei, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, and the Hanlin academicians Wen T'ing-shih and Chang Hsiao-ch'ien.[6] Soon after this, Chang, representing the Society, paid a visit to Sir Nicholas O'Conor, (1843-1908) the British Minister at Peking. O'Conor had been the British Representative since 1892 and had witnessed the steady increase of inefficiency and corruption in the Ch'ing government, so that China's defeat by Japan in 1895 was in his eyes to a large extent inevitable. He had also become convinced that the only salvation for China was immediate and thorough-going reforms. When Chang came to see O'Conor, he brought along a copy of the Society's Manifesto, setting forth their aims and activities,[7] and he assured the Minister that the moment was opportune for a movement of the kind, because "men like himself (Chang) had begun to realise that the system, which condemned them to spend their best years of life in the attainment of knowledge which rather unfitted than qualified them for the discharge of their duties to the State, ought to be superseded by something more practical.[8]" The purpose of his

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[6]See Wang Chü-ch'ang "Yen Fu teng-jen chuan-chi" in WHPF IV, 83-4; Wang Ch'i-chü (ed) "Ch'iang Hsüeh Hui chi ch'i-ta hsüeh-hui" in WHPF IV, 373-478.

[7]The Manifesto is found in Wang Ch'i-chü op. cit. in WHPF IV, 384-94. See also K'ang's statement for the society in S. Y. Teng and J. K. Fairbank, China's Response to the West (Cambridge, Mass. 1961) 152-3

[8]O'Conor to F. O. 23 Oct. 1895, FO 17/1239.

visit was to seek the support of the British Legation in the movement, and more specifically, to ask Sir Nicholas to speak well of the Society to the Ministers of the Tsungli-yamen, particularly to Weng T'ung-ho (1830-1904), tutor of the Emperor.[9] O'Conor promised to do his best.

> "My visitor did not, I confess, strike me as being imbued with the fervours of a born reformer, but of the thorough earnestness of himself and his companions there can be no doubt, and the movement is chiefly remarkable as being the first and only spontaneous one of its kind that has, so far as I know, ever been originated amongst the official classes in any part of the Empire."[10]

In fact, a week later, when O'Conor paid his farewell visit to the Tsungli-yamen prior to his transfer to St. Petersburg, he not only spoke to them of the need of reform, but did so in very strong language. Both Li Hung-chang (1823-1901)[11] and Weng T'ung-ho had previously urged O'Conor to impress on Prince Kung, (I-hsin) (1832-1898), President of the yamen, the necessity of serious reforms in the public administration of China. So when he had an interview with Prince Kung on 31 October, O'Conor

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[9] For accounts of Weng, see Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, op. cit. 2, also given in WHPF I, 250; A. W. Hummel, Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (Washington 1944) II, 860-1; R. F. Johnston, Twilight in the Forbidden City (London 1934) 22-3; Hsiao Kung-ch'üan, "Weng T'ung-ho and the Reform Movement of 1898" in Tsing-hua Journal of Chinese Studies I, 2 (1957) 111-246. Sir N. O'Conor also gives an account of Weng in FO 17/1239 O'Conor to F. O. of 23 Oct. 1895; and FO 17/1335 MacDonald to F. O. of 18 June 1898 contains an account of his career leading to his dismissal from office in 1898.

[10] O'Conor to F. O. 23 Oct. 1895, in FO 17/1239

[11] Li was then a Grand Secretary. See Hummel, op. cit. I, 464-71; Lo Erh-kang, Hsiang-chün Hsin-chih (Changsha 1917) 37-75; L. C. Arlington, Through the Dragon's Eyes (London 1931) 22-4; S. Spector, Li Hung-chang and the Huai Army (Seattle, Wash. 1964) 259-65.

had one pressing topic on his mind, and he was almost passionate in his expression of it:[12]

> "I excused myself for the frankness of my language by the fact that this was my last opportunity for striving to influence them, and by the strength of my conviction that unless they acted promptly and with energy, the Empire was doomed. I told the Prince the main burden of the responsibility lay with him, and future generations looking back on what may prove to be the last days of the Dynasty and Empire would single him out as the man who might have saved his country if he used his opportunities. Nothing could possibly excuse the failure on his part to lay before the Emperor the dangers of the situation, and not only to do so once or twice, but persevere if needful, for weeks and months, until His Majesty is thoroughly awakened to the gravity of the crisis."

And again:

> "It had been hoped that the war would rouse her from her stupor, but all such expectations were so far disappointed. If she still refused to bestir herself, I ventured to prophesy that within very few years, the Dynasty would fall, and carry with it Prince Kung and all those now in power. If he felt himself too old or in too weak health to undertake the task of reform, let him frankly tell his Sovereign so and invite the appointment of others, but he could not free himself from the responsibility for the catastrophe that was coming if he retained his position without taking action."

After this, it was no wonder that the yamen Ministers had little to say in reply, and seemed "disinclined to enter upon a discussion of what I had said ... "[13]

Nevertheless, O'Conor left China in an optimistic frame of mind, and felt that even if he had not been able to witness the inauguration of any serious reforms, he had at least done his part well, of leaving the Chinese Government with the conviction that England was sincerely

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[12]The quotations are in O'Conor to F.O., 30 Oct. 1895, FO 17/1239. Compare this with Liang Ch'i-ch'ao in WHPF I, 268, where he reports that when O'Conor spoke of the weakness of China's armed forces and their need of reform, Prince Kung's reply was that the Chinese army was only for the purpose of keeping internal peace and not for national defence. An account of this interview is also given by Sir John Jordon, "Some Chinese I have Known" in Nineteenth Century and After Vol. 88, (Dec. 1920) 945-9.

[13]O'Conor to F.O., 30 Oct. 1895, FO 17/1239.

friendly to them and anxious to aid in their regeneration.[14] It can be seen that, at this juncture, the British Legation was under the impression that the formation of the Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui and a number of other study societies in Peking and elsewhere was the first manifestation of a real, nation-wide reform movement, initiated by enlightened government officials, and supported by most of the literate population. This sentiment was shared by the Representatives of the other Powers in Peking, who had written warm panegyrics to their governments upon what appeared to be a promising undertaking. The Japanese Minister, Baron Hayashi, was particularly enthusiastic.[15] The North China Herald, however, was more cautious in its appreciation of these activities: "...though it would be unwise to be too sure that the movement is deep and permanent; that those who are directing it are practical and not visionary in their aims..."[16]

After the departure of O'Conor, the British Legation at Peking was left in the charge of William N. Beauclerk, Secretary of the Legation since 1890. It was therefore to him that two members of the "Hanlin Society" came to ensure that they continued to enjoy the sympathy and support of the Legation in their movement. Beauclerk was left with an impression of the "crude and primitive notions with which they are entering upon their self-imposed task. They hardly appeared to have grasped the gigantic nature of the work of the reform of the Chinese Empire, nor did they quite seem to know how and where to begin."[17] However, they did ask

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[14] O'Conor to F. O., 3 Nov. 1895, FO 17/1240

[15] As reported by Beauclerk to F. O., 24 Jan. 1896, FO 17/1275

[16] North China Herald of 22 Nov. 1895 p. 851, col. 1-3, a special article.

[17] Beauclerk to F. O. 26 Nov. 1895, FO 17/1240

for practical assistance in the way of some European books with which to form a library, where the translated works were to serve for the diffusion of modern knowledge and science, and the education of the Chinese in Western modes of thought and methods of progress. They intended to pay for these books in advance, but Beauclerk offered a number as a free gift from the British Government. He enclosed a list of his suggestions:[18]

> Fawcett's Political Economy
> Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations
> Taswell-Langmead's Constitutional History of England
> Stephen's History of the Criminal Law
> Professor Bain's works (Probably Professor Alexander Bain, Professor of Logic at the University of Aberdeen.)
> Works of John Stuart Mill
> Lewes' History of Philosophy
> Ganot's Natural Philosophy
> Modern History from 1517 to 1874
> Wallace's Darwinism

It was all very promising moral support for reforms in China, but when it came to direct involvement in their programmes, the Foreign Office endeavoured to be certain of the bona fides of the Society and its relations to the Chinese Government. Accordingly, Beauclerk was instructed to submit further information on the management and prospects of the Society before carrying out the presentation of books.[19]

By this time, ill-fortune had befallen the Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui. On 22 January, 1896, a raid was made upon the premises of the Society, as a consequence of charges brought against it by a Censor, Yang Ch'ung-i. The accusations were that the Society was a combination to raise money, tended to mislead men, and was an injury to the government. The Censor urged that the club be closed and the members handed over to the Board of

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[18] Ibid.

[19] FO to Beauclerk, 4 Feb. 1896, ibid.

Punishment. But Prince Kung favoured only the first suggestion, and using his influence at Court, the Prince had the Society prohibited, but no arrests were made. The real reason for the suppression of the Society, which at this time enjoyed the patronage of such high officials as Chang Chih-tung and Yüan Shih-k'ai,[20] which published a number of journals, and had a flourishing branch in Shanghai, was doubtless attributable to the antagonism of the older, conservative officials, who stood against any innovations. It was also suggested that some of the younger reformers had spoken of the movement as the germ of a Parliamentary system, which was of course deemed an offence by the existing government. Another incriminating feature was that its membership was limited to the Chinese, while the Manchus were excluded as not possessing the requisite amount of scholarship and progressiveness.[21]

The closing of the Society did not curb the reform movement, as other societies soon began to appear, now ranging from Peking to Canton and along the Yangtse areas.[22] Nevertheless the disappointment expressed by the foreign Legations in Peking as well as the English press at its untimely end seemed to exceed by far their confidence in the undertaking at its institution. This supposedly signified "the hopelessness of the whole thing. Reform is poisoned at its source ... "[23] and the Imperial

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[20]Chang was Viceroy at Wuchang, and Yüan trainer and commander of the New Army at Tientsin.

[21]Peking and Tientsin Times, 1 Feb. 1896, p. 398, col. 2-3, leading article. Beauclerk to FO, 24 Jan. 1896, in FO 17/1275.

[22]Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, "Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui feng-chin-hou chih hsüeh-hui hsüeh-t'ang pao-kuan" in WHPF IV, 395-6, gives a list of the establishments in various provinces.

[23]North China Herald 12 Feb. 1896, p. 233-4, col. 1-3, leading article.

Censors were blamed for the stifling of progress. "Sir N. O'Conor is reported to have expressed his opinion that there would be no real reform in China until all the Censors had their heads taken off. Sir Nicholas hit the nail on the head...."[24] In the final analysis, it was even suggested that China's regeneration might well not be possible, unless under foreign tutelage.[25]

Yet as far as Great Britain was concerned, the newly-appointed Minister to Peking shared none of his predecessor's patience or sympathy with reformers.[26] It was, after all, very often the personal sentiments of its representatives in China which really formulated British policy towards the Chinese reform movement.

Sir Claude MacDonald (1852-1915) began his official career in ~~the~~ a Scottish regiment, from which he retired in March 1896. His experiences, however, were entirely centered around Africa. After the departure of O'Conor from Peking in November, 1895, there was a long period of silence from the Foreign Office as to who his successor was likely to be. And when it was finally announced, in January 1896, that Sir Claude MacDonald

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[24] Peking and Tientsin Times 8 Aug. 1896, p. 90, col. 4-5

[25] North China Herald 26 Feb. 1897, p. 334, col. 2-3

[26] T. Richard to G. N. Curzon, 31 July, 1896, in FO 17/1289 states "(Sir N. O'Conor) would have been the grand man to foster it (the reform movement) had he not been needed elsewhere. His counsel and sympathy were always an inspiration to us." See also T. Richard, Forty-five Years in China (New York, 1916) 266, also given in WHPF III, 565: "I went to Tientsin in order to meet the British Minister (Sir C. MacDonald) who was coming back from Pei-tai-ho. I pleaded with him to do his utmost to save the Emperor and the lives of the captured Reformers. But he was already prejudiced against them, his attitude being quite unlike that of his predecessor Sir Nicholas O'Conor. His prejudice rested largely on ignorance, for I subsequently learnt that he told a friend that before his return from Pei-tai-ho he had never heard of K'ang Yu-wei."

was to be appointed, there were expressions of surprise and disappointment from China as well as at home in England. It was long understood that the delay in the announcement of the appointment of a new minister was due to Lord Salisbury's desire of finding a man with exceptional qualities, experienced and capable of dealing with Far Eastern situations. Now someone outside the Diplomatic Service was chosen, one "whose record so far as it is known to the public, does not suggest absolute confidence. His services have hitherto been employed in Africa, and he has still to make his reputation as a diplomatist...."[27] In the House of Commons, the Foreign Office was strongly criticised for an unwise choice, and an explanation demanded from the Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs.[28]

On the other hand, it was also felt that perhaps it was well to "get out of the old groove" in appointing a completely different type of man to Peking. "A certain amount of peremptoriness will be by no means amiss at Peking.... The dancing-master part of Chinese diplomacy is easily picked up, and Sir Claude MacDonald may be trusted for the rest."[29] And from another source: "There will now, we should hope, be no mealy-mouthedness in the dealings of our Legation with the Tsungli-yamen."[30] In fact, from those who saw good in the appointment, the chief characteristic of Sir Claude which impressed them was that he was a man of action and capacity, alert, earnest and energetic. His treatment

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[27] The Times 13 Jan. 1896, p. 9, col. 4-5, leading article.

[28] Parliamentary Debates, 3 July, 1896; North China Herald 21 Aug. 1896, p. 304-5, col. 1-3.

[29] Pall Mall and St. James magazines reprinted in London and China Express 17 Jan. 1896, p. 63, col. 1-2.

[30] North China Herald 17 Jan. 1896, p. 76, col. 2-3; See also Sir Meyrick Hewlett, Forty Years in China (London 1943) 5-6

of later events will prove that they were more than justified.

From the beginning Sir Claude MacDonald proved to be a real departure from the usual Ministers from Britain. He arrived in Peking on 22 April, 1896, and assumed charge of the Legation. Immediately, he found cause for conflict with the Tsungli-yamen. He had presented his credentials to the yamen on 7 May, and on the 11th he called there again asking to see Prince Kung or Prince Ch'ing (I-K'uang) (1776-1820) the Presidents. As they were not present at the time, MacDonald refused to leave with the other Ministers the communication he wished to transmit. The Ministers were offended. The matter was reported to the Chinese Minister in London, who made representations to the Foreign Office, with the complaint that it was not customary for foreign representatives to insist on seeing any one particular member of the yamen, as they were all equal, unless prior notification was given in writing. The Foreign Office had no defence for MacDonald, and though the matter was not pursued further it did give a bad beginning to the relations between the British Legation under MacDonald and the government of Peking.[31]

Within three months of his assuming office, MacDonald had already decided that the British Government had made a mistake in judging the Chinese by European standards. In the negotiations of the "Andrews' Case" whereby compensation was claimed by a British merchant from the Canton Provincial Government for a breach of faith,[32] his suggestion of a line of policy was: "Unless they are made to smart for it, we shall never

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[31] See Memorandum by F. Bertie, 14 May 1896, FO 17/1288

[32] See F. O. correspondence Feb.-July, 1896, FO 17/1275-1278

make headway in this country, and shall lose such way as we now have," and again, "We shall never do any good in this country until we show the governing body very plainly that we have it in our power to punish any act of discourtesy with another and greater act of discourtesy, amounting if necessary to force."[33] At the slightest provocation, it was often MacDonald's practice to apply for a landing party from a British ship to reinforce his diplomatic endeavours. On the occasion of the Canton difficulties, the Foreign Office refused his request for an army to seize the likin office and the city until the claims were paid in full and an apology made. Fortunately these measures were thought by the government at home to be too drastic, and would give a dangerous precedant to other Powers.[34]

Such was the personality of the man representing British policy in China as events in the capital moved rapidly towards the summer of 1898. Following the closure of the Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui, a host of other study societies were founded; a common feature was that they provided useful platforms for the eager reformers to broadcast their gospel of learning from the West and applying this knowledge to a reformed Chinese administration. Among the successors to the Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui, more notable were the Shih-Wu Hsüeh-t'ang (College of Current Affairs) in Hunan, and the Pao-kuo Hui (National Protection Society) in Peking. The Shih-Wu College began giving lectures in November, 1897, under Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's direction, and it was significant that the Provincial Governor Ch'en

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[33] MacDonald to F. O. (Bertie) 22 July 1896, FO 17/1278, to which Lord Salisbury minuted, "An acute attack of morbus consularis."

[34] F. O. tel. to MacDonald, 21 July 1896, FO 17/1279

Pao-chen permitted his name to be associated with the College, together with the Acting Judicial Commissioner Huang Tsun-hsien.[35] The Pao-kuo Hui was started in Peking on 12 April, 1898, under the personal management of K'ang Yu-wei, who seized the occasion of Germany's occupation of Kiao-chow to propagate his slogan that national salvation was now an urgent matter.[36]

Besides these societies, the scholar-reformers also launched a press campaign as the best means of bringing home to the literate population the dangers threatening their nation. Among these publications were the Shih-Wu Pao (The Needs of the Times), a ten-day pamphlet published from 9 August, 1896, in Shanghai, and the Kuo-Wen Pao (National News) published in Tientsin from 26 December 1897. The former employed a staff of forty writers under the direction of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, and its circulation in 1898 was estimated at ten thousand copies throughout all the provinces. A notable feature about it was that it had as its patron the Wuchang Viceroy Chang Chih-tung, whose financial contributions really

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[35] Yang Fu-li, op.cit. in WHPF IV, 171-81; Yu Ping-ch'i, "Huang Tsun-hsien nien-p'u" in WHPF IV, 185-7; Hu Ssu-ching "Ch'en Pao-chen" in WHPF IV, 79-80; Ting Wen-chiang, op.cit. 50-2.

[36] K'ang Yu-wei, op.cit. in WHPF IV, 143-4, Wang Ch'i-chü, op.cit. in WHPF IV, 396-402, 416-9. The North China Herald 16 May, 1898, p. 854-5, col. 3, 1, gives a popular account of the origin of the Kiao-chow incident; A squad of German soldiers having made their way to Kaomi, a town adjacent to Kiao-chow, some of them entered the Temple of Confucius, broke off an arm of the Sage, and carried it away as a trophy destined to figure in a Berlin museum. This was more than Chinese pride would stand. The story was industriously circulated among the scholars of the Empire assembled for the Metropolitan examinations. Rushing together, they announced that their religion was in danger, not from foreign missionaries, but from the vandalism of German soldiers ....

kept the paper going.[37] On 26 July, 1898, an Imperial Edict made this newspaper an official concern, and on 12 September, 1898, another Edict directed that a similar journal should be published in Peking in connection with the Shanghai Shih-Wu Pao.[38]

The Kuo-Wen Pao was also published every ten days, and was managed by Yen Fu (1853-1921), a director at a recently established Naval Academy, who was noted for his translations of European works into Chinese.[39] It was no wonder that the Kuo-Wen Pao soon acquired a reputation for the high quality of its articles, which were mainly taken from the European and Japanese press, and for its critical yet accurate observations on politics. In fact, due to some of its remarks on the policy and successes of the Russians, early in 1898, which reflected somewhat on the value of the services rendered to their country by some of the Imperial advisers, an Edict was issued on 3 May, demanding a full investigation of the journal,

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[37] Chang was particularly sought after as their champion by the reformers, because of the early innovations he had initiated in the provinces he had administered, Kwangtung and Kwangsi, Hunan and Hupeh. In 1898, he published a reform treatise Ch'üan-hsüeh P'ien (Exhortation to Learning) which was used by the reformers as a sort of party platform. See A. W. Hummel, op.cit. I, 28-9; Wu Tse op.cit. 21; Lin Mousheng, Men and Ideas (New York 1942) 97; Wen Ching, op.cit. 22, 219; M. E. Cameron, "The Public Career of Chang Chih-tung" in Pacific Historical Review VII (1938) 187-210; C. Y. Wang, op.cit. 52-3.

[38] The Edicts are given in Lin Shu-hui (ed) "Shang-yü san-i-liu tiao" in WHPF II, 44, 87-8. See also R. S. Britton, The Chinese Periodical Press (Shanghai 1933) 91-4; Ko Kung-chen, Chung-kuo Pao-hsüeh Shih (Shanghai 1931) 123-4; The Times 19 July, 1898, 4, col. 1-2; MacDonald to F. O., 19 Sept. 1898, FO 17/1336.

[39] Yen Fu's considerable contributions to China's understanding of the West is discussed in B. Schwartz, In Search of Wealth and Power, Yen Fu and the West (Cambridge, Mass. 1964) 237-47; C. Y. Wang, op.cit. 195-212.

and as a result it stopped publication soon after.[40]

It was obvious that the scholar-reformers would not have undertaken these journalistic feats unaided, for few were thoroughly conversant with Western languages and cultures. In this respect they owed much to the enthusiastic support, moral as well as practical, given to their movement by the foreign missionaries. The most well-known, and the one working closest with the reformers, was the English Baptist Missionary Timothy Richard, (1845-1919) He came to China in 1870, and in 1887 established the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge Among the Chinese (Kuang-hsüeh Hui) In 1890-1 he was invited by Li Hung-chang to edit the Shih Pao, a foreign-controlled newspaper at Tientsin, and this in the hands of Richard became an organ to publicise his own views on reforming China.[41] Richard was also energetic in seeking personal contact with minor officials in Peking, many of whom became leaders in the 1898 movement. In 1895, for example, he had meetings with Chang Chih-tung at Nanking on 5 and 17 February; at Peking with Li Hung-chang on 17 and 23 September; Sun Chia-nai on 12 October; K'ang Yu-wei on 17 October; Weng T'ung-ho on 26 October; Prince Kung and others of the Tsungli-yamen on 30 October. His constant plea with all these men was China's need to reform, and he certainly gave the reformers the impression

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[40] Ko Kung-chen, op.cit. 139-40, 145-6; Britton, op.cit. 97; The Times 19 July, 1898, p. 4, col. 2; the Edict is in Lin Shu-hui, op.cit. in WHPF II, 15.

[41] See Ko Kung-chen, op.cit. 77, for the origins of the Shih Pao.

that British aid was theirs for the asking.[42] This conviction would be an important influence on the subsequent activities of K'ang Yu-wei.

Another missionary active in helping to propagate education in China was the American Presbyterian, Gilbert Reid. In the summer of 1897, Reid conceived of a plan to set up an International Institute in Peking, which was to consist of a large auditorium, a library and reading room, a museum, classrooms, and a reception hall; it was to be an intellectual centre for the spread of Western enlightenment amongst the Chinese. It was an admirable undertaking; the only drawback was the lack of funds for such an ambitious project, and after an outburst of approval and encouragement from foreigners both inside and outside of China, it gradually faded into oblivion.[43] This in fact was characteristic of foreign, and especially missionary, attitudes towards reform in China: all that was needed was to instil Western "learning" into the Chinese mind, and the

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[42] T. Richard, op.cit. 244-8, 256-9, also in WHPF IV, 553; see also T. Richard to Curzon, 31 July, 1896, FO 17/1289; E. Soothill, Timothy Richard of China (London 1924) 174-304; Paul Cohen, "Missionary Approaches: Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard" in Harvard University, Papers on China XI, (1957) 29-62; Wang Shu-huai, Wai-jen yü Wu-hsü pien-fa (Taiwan 1965) 26-62; Lu Tan-lin, in Ko-ming shih-t'an (Nanking 1947) 163-7, discusses the influence of the Society on the revolutionaries; see also C. Y. Ch'en, "Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's Missionary Education; a Case Study of Missionary Influence on the Reformers" in Harvard University, Papers on China XVI (1962) 66-125

[43] Accounts of the activities of the Institute are found in D. MacGillivray (ed) A Century of Protestant Missions in China, 1807-1907 (Shanghai 1907) 550; K. S. Latourette, A History of Christian Missions in China (London 1929) 602-3; Wang Shu-huai, op.cit. 57-9; the China Association, Annual Report 1898-9 Appendix M, "Proposed International Institute at Peking," in which approval for the scheme was expressed; see also the North China Herald 23 July, 1897, p. 645, col. 2; Reid's early evangelistic efforts are discussed in Irwin T. Hyatt, "Protestant Missions in China" in K. C. Liu (ed) American Missionaries in China (Cambridge, Mass. 1966) 112-4.

next step, a regenerated and enlightened nation, would follow quite naturally, with all the wonders of Western science, political methods and economic theories fitting in comfortably within the traditional Chinese framework of society. Officially, of course, European sentiments did not run along such idealistic lines; in point of fact, the activities of the missionaries were more of a hindrance than an advantage as far as diplomatic relations with the Chinese Government were concerned. We need not go into the numerous cases of conflict caused by missionaries interfering in lawsuits on behalf of their converts, which punctuated the whole of the history of missions in China.[44] As it was rather unkindly pointed out:[45]

> "Legations are naturally conservative; they do not like trouble; they like things to go on quietly, they want to stand upon the ancient ways, and not be worried with innovations. Two-thirds of the cases that disturb the calm of the Legations come from the missionaries, and as a class, they are therefore like a red rag to some of the Legations; and the fact that reformers were in many cases pupils of missionaries, getting their knowledge and their inspiration from missionary sources, helped to dispose official Peking to look coldly on the new light."

This was largely true of the British Government.

Both the Legation at Peking and the Foreign Office in London had had a long succession of communications from Timothy Richard, invariably seeking official support for one or the other of his schemes of propagating reform in China. Now in August, 1897, he launched a "Society for Aiding China to Fall in with the Right Principles of Universal Progress." In

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[44] See Paul A. Cohen, China and Christianity, the Missionary Movement and the Growth of Chinese Antiforeignism, 1860-1870 (Cambridge, Mass, 1963) Chapters 3-5; Edmund S. Wehrle, Britain, China and the Antimissionary Riots 1891-1900 (Minneapolis, 1966) 19-44

[45] North China Herald 28 Nov. 1898, p. 985-6, col. 2-3, leading article.

presenting the Foreign Office with its prospectus, he suggested three ways in which Great Britain could help "Young China":[46]

> "1. Instead of apparently a merely national policy which Western nations have adopted in China, resulting in setting their respective interests diametrically opposed to one another, let a universal policy be adopted in which the national and universal coincide.
>
> 2. When the next revision of the tariff with China takes place, grant a certain rise, in the tariff, not on condition but so that a percentage of the customs revenue may be devoted to modern education. The effect of this will be to send many, who shall be the future leaders in China, to England for education, where they will form many friends in this country, as modern education in the Chinese mind is mainly connected with education in England; and this will increase with the increase of trade.
>
> 3. A grant of £1,000 worth of suitable apparatus for lectures to the Reform Society in Peking would be very serviceable."

Richard emphasized the political importance of these measures: "It would be well if England that has the most of the foreign trade in China, should not be behind any in her sympathy with Young China." He pointed out that at the present juncture, Great Britain alone stood in the good grace of the Chinese government; it was an opportunity not to be lost. Arguments of this nature were obviously nothing new to the Foreign Office, which was used to the tactics of missionaries in general, and Timothy Richard in particular. The reaction was characteristic: G. N. Curzon, Under-secretary of State at the Foreign Office, minuted: "Here is a letter from the cracked missionary.... His positive suggestions (1) (2) and (3) will give you a measure of his capacity to advise." And Again: "This inculcation comes from the mad mullah who

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[46] Richard to Curzon, 4 Aug., 1897, FO 17/1330; also see Brenan to F. O., 26 Sept., 1898, FO 17/1718, in which he described Richard as "an intriguing English Protestant Missionary in Peking, who seems to have been giving K'ang and his following very bad advice."

interviewed me..."[47]

Yet it must not be concluded that Great Britain was entirely disinterested in the efforts at reform in China. On the contrary, she was just as hopeful as other Powers concerned with China to see the Chinese Government regain sufficient strength and administrative efficiency at least to afford security for their commercial enterprises, of which Britain had by far the predominant share. Britain was equally eager to see China able to defend herself from the territorial ambitions of any aggressive Power, who would thus encroach upon the special position of the British trader in China. Hence by virtue of selfish commercial interests as well as high moral principles, Britain could not isolate herself from the stirrings of reform in China in the years after the Sino-Japanese War. It was true that the British Government had little confidence in the activities of the scholar-reformers, and did not take their study societies and newspapers very seriously. It did not seem that they could achieve much by such methods. But when the Emperor of China began to take the lead in the movement, as he did in the summer of 1898, then it was a different matter.

The Emperor Kuang-hsü (Tsai-t'ien) (1871-1908) was eventually presented with the fifth attempt of K'ang Yu-wei to memoralize the Throne, through the actions of his supporters in Peking, Yang Shen-hsiu, (a Censor), Yang Jui, (a member of the Grand Secretariat), and Hsü Chih-ching, (a sub-chancellor of the Grand Secretariat).[48] In this petition,

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[47]Curzon Minutes on Richard to Curzon, 4 Aug. 1, 1897, FO 17/1330

[48]For their biographies, see "K'ang Yu-wei teng-jen chuan-ch'i" in WHPF IV, 59-60, 64-8, 78; Li Chien-nung (trans. Teng and Ingalls) The Political History of China (New York 1956) 152-3, refutes the theory that K'ang was introduced to the Emperor's notice by Weng T'ung-ho. Compare with Ho Ping-ti, "Weng T'ung-ho and the Hundred Days of Reform" in Far Eastern Quarterly X (Feb. 1951) 125-35

besides urging a national policy of reform, K'ang also begged the Emperor to take as models the reforming rulers the Meiji Emperor of Japan and Peter the Great of Russia. He offered his personal services should a reform programme be contemplated.[49] By then, K'ang had already been made a second class assistant-secretary on the Board of Works, and after reading this last petition of his, the Emperor ordered that he be summoned to a meeting at the Tsungli-yamen to have his ideas discussed. This took place on 24 January, 1898.[50] From then on, with K'ang being given increasing responsibility, and the Emperor becoming more enthusiastic, the reform movement gathered momentum.

The first series of Edicts in January-February 1898, aiming at the changes of the perfunctory habits of Chinese officials, insisted on the encouragement of capable and energetic men and the dismissal of the incompetent.[51] These decrees took the British Legation by some surprise, as Sir Claude did not think that it was customary for the chief officers of the central government to be admonished in the terms of Imperial Decrees.[52] The Foreign Office at home seemed happier about the news: "They are waking up!"[53]

By June, the movement reached its climax, and from 11 June to 19 September, roughly a span of one hundred days, decrees were daily

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[49] The petition is given in full in Wang Ch'i-chü (ed) "K'ang Yu-wei tsou-i erh-shih-chiu pien" in WHPF II, 188-97; K'ang Yu-wei, op.cit. I, 15b-16; also Wu Tse, op.cit. 14.

[50] The meeting is related in Lo Jung-pang, op.cit. 83-85.

[51] The Edicts are given in Lin Shu-hui, op.cit. in WHPF II, 7-10.

[52] MacDonald to F. O., 5 Feb. 1898, in FO 17/1333.

[53] F. Bertie minute on the above, ibid.

issued announcing comprehensive changes in all aspects of the administration as well as in foreign relations.[54] What particularly impressed the British observers in these measures was the frank admission by the Emperor of weakness and inefficiency in the workings of the central and provincial governments; this knowledge, they felt, augured well for the cause of reform.[55]

On the other hand, as the succession of "paper reforms" reached heady heights, Sir Claude MacDonald began to express serious doubts whether the tradition-bound Chinese bureaucracy could really be moved by these strange innovations that the Emperor desired to impose on it. When a decree of 12 June proposed to send members of the Imperial family abroad for the purposes of advancement of commerce and extension of intercourse with foreigners, MacDonald regarded it a "startling" measure, since hitherto the movements of the Imperial Clans had been for political reasons closely circumscribed.[56] A decree of 23 June directed radical changes in the obligatory subjects at the competitive examinations; MacDonald felt that the change, having been made so suddenly, constituted an injustice to those who have been preparing for the examinations under the present conditions, and he feared it would lead to considerable discontent among the group of intending scholars.[57] When it was proposed, by Edict of 28 June, to establish a College or University at Peking, MacDonald wanted to know exactly

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[54] See the Edicts in Lin Shu-hui, op.cit. in WHPF II, 17-99. Also collected in The Times of 17 Oct., 1898, p. 13-4, col. 6; and 31 Oct., 1898, p.3, col. 1-3.

[55] See The Times, 3 June 1898, p. 10, col. 1; North China Herald, 19 Sept. 1898, p. 544, col. 2-3.

[56] MacDonald to F. O. 18 June 1898, FO 17/1335.

[57] MacDonald to F. O. ibid., 9 July 1898.

what courses of study they intended; he thought a new university would be likely to clash with the already existing government college, the Tung Wen Kuan.[58] By a decree of 5 July, the Emperor expressed his dissatisfaction with the bondage of ancient customs which prevented China from progressing along foreign lines, and on 30 August, he decided to abolish several important posts and a host of minor ones, both in the capital and in the provinces. All this seemed "revolutionary" to MacDonald, and he felt that it was impossible to be sanguine about the prospects for these plans. He could see few signs of their taking practical effect.[59]

By this time, of course, the undue haste and lack of a sense of balance manifested by the Emperor was recognised by the Foreign Office. Far from "waking up" properly, the Chinese Government seemed to be rushing into an internal disaster as conservative resentment towards the hasty changes began to be intensified. In an edict of 12 September, calling on the attention of the people to the advantages of Western methods, Emperor Kuang-hsü urged his subjects to know that they "could depend on their prince," and appealed to them to make China powerful by working for reform with "united minds."[60] By the time report of this reached the Foreign Office, the reform movement had collapsed and the Emperor had become only a "broken reed"[61] on whom the Chinese people could hardly depend.

The reforming Emperor had failed to estimate the strength of conservative opposition against his innovations. On 21 September, the

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[58] MacDonald to F. O. ibid.

[59] MacDonald to F. O. 2 Sept. 1898, FO 17/1336.

[60] MacDonald to F. O. 17 Sept. 1898, ibid.

[61] F. A. Campbell's Minute, ibid.

Empress-Dowager Tz'u-hsi (1835-1908), strengthened by the support of Jung-Lu, then Governor-General of Chihli, and Yüan Shih-k'ai in command of the New Army, announced that she was taking over control of the government. The Emperor was virtually forced to abdicate, and decrees reversing all his reform measures began to appear.[62] It was the end of the "Hundred Days."

At this turn of events, the British Government found itself directly involved in the aftermath of the reform movement. Even though the British had little hope of the Emperor's and K'ang's measures being immediately put into practice, there existed a certain degree of sympathy with and satisfaction at the fact that it was after all a hopeful departure from their experience of a backward, unprogressive Chinese nation. Even Sir Claude admitted that the Emperor's reforming decrees "did go further than anything previously emanating from the sovereign of China in their recognition of the need of taking examples from foreign nations."[63] Now when the Empress-Dowager, upon her resuming control of the government, began a widespread programme of persecution of the erstwhile reformers, the British Government felt that they could not stand idly by. It must be noted however that what transpired was no definite point of policy directed from

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[62] Liang Ch'i-ch'ao in Wu-hsü cheng-pien chi (Japan 1899, reprinted Peking 1954) gives his interpretation of the causes for the failure of the movement; K'ang Yu-wei's version is given in Lo Jung-pang, op.cit. 121-7; see also Ch'en Ch'iao, "Wu-hsü cheng-pien shih fan-pien-fa jen-wu chih cheng-ch'ih ssu-hsiang" in Yen-ching Hsüeh-pao 25 (Peking 1939); Wu Tse, "Wu-hsü cheng-pien yü hsin-chiu t'ang-cheng" in Chung-kuo Chien-she VI (Sept. 1948) 42-5; North China Herald 3 Oct. 1898, p. 625, col. 1-3; Bax-Ironside to F. O., 15 April 1899, FO 17/17/1373 which an eye-witness account of the coup is written by J. B. Eames; the role of Yüan Shih-k'ai as a "traitor" in the reform movement is expounded in Norman D. Palmer, "Makers of modern China: the strong man, Yüan Shih-k'ai" in Current History, XV (Sept. 1948) 150-1; Ch'en Po-ta, Ch'ieh-kuo ta-tao Yüan Shih-k'ai (Peking 1949) 1-4; K. Ch'en, "Yüan Shih-k'ai and the Coup d'etat of 1898 in China" in Pacific Historical Review VI (1937) 181-7.

[63] MacDonald to FO, 9 July 1898, FO 17/1335.

the Foreign Office, and the British Government was to be criticised for this from many sides; but out of the personal sentiments towards the reformers of some of its administrators in China, the British Government found that it had taken on the task of protecting the reform leader K'ang Yu-wei from the vengeance of the Empress-Dowager.

For the moment, Sir Claude MacDonald in Peking had just achieved a notable diplomatic feat in indirectly causing the dismissal Li Hung-chang (decreed on 7 September, 1898), from the Tsungli-yamen. British interests in China had long been in conflict with those of Russia in the field of concession-hunting, and Li had early shown himself to have been ready to propitiate Russia's demands at the risk of antagonising Great Britain. The climax came during the negotiations for a loan regarding the construction of the Shan-hai-kuan-Newchwang Railway, and MacDonald had found occasion during an interview on 3 September at the yamen, to deliver a scathing attack against Li Hung-chang, and to his person, for his obstructive policy in all things concerning British interests in China.[64]

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[64]MacDonald tel. to F.O., 8 Sept. 1898, FO 17/1341, and confidential despatch, 14 Sept. 1898, FO 17/1336; the edict of dismissal is seen in Lin Shu-hui, op.cit. in WHPF II, 77. S. F. Wright, in Hart and the Chinese Customs (Belfast 1950) asserts that Li's dismissal was not altogether unexpected, since he was regarded as primarily being responsible for China's defeat at the hands of Japan in 1895 and generally suspected of being in Russia's pay. In a letter to Campbell at the F.O. written by Sir Robert Hart, 25 Sept. 1898 (p. 717-8) "I fear it is the pro-Russian party that is winning, and that the deposition (almost) of the Emperor is Pavloff's reply to Li's expulsion from the yamen." A. I. Pavlov was the chargé d'affaire of the Russian Legation. Sir John Jordon's impressions of Li are recorded, in "Some Chinese I have known." Nineteenth Century and After Vol. 88 (Dec. 1920); 949-50: "He was intensely conceited, spoke a villainous dialect, and was altogether a difficult person to handle. This was doubtless largely due to the fact that he was not a persona grata in the British Legation in those days, nor with the British communities in China, who had the discernment to see that his policy, with all its cleverness, was likely to overreach itself in the end..." See W. L. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism (New York 1935) 396-682, for some of Li's policies.

The fact that Li's dismissal came a few days later was generally regarded as a triumph of British diplomacy against Russia, and a reassertion of British prestige in China.[65]

Now, when the reaction to the reform movement occurred, and the Empress-Dowager, whose protege Li was known to have been, was in control, there was immediate suspicion that Russia must have had a hand in the coup d'etat, and that it was her means of retaliating against the British. No evidence of this could be found, and it was at best only a popular rumour among those concerned with pushing British influence in China.[66] Nevertheless on 21 September, 1898, when the house of Chang Yin-huan, a Vice-President of the Board of Revenue, was searched for the presence of K'ang Yu-wei, and Chang subsequently arrested for his support of the reformers, MacDonald decided that he must assert himself once again. It was also known that Li and Chang were deadly enemies. The British were on especially good terms with Chang Yin-huan, who represented China at the jubilee celebrations of Queen Victoria in London in 1897, and whose financial policies had always appeared "enlightened" in English eyes.[67] It became known that he was due to be executed on 26 September, and

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[65] See London and China Express of 9 Sept. 1898, p. 785, col. 2; North China Herald of 23 Sept. 1898, p. 829, col. 1-2; and the Peking and Tientsin Times of 24 Sept. 1898, p. 119, col. 2-3, in a leading article which argues that the Empress-Dowager effected the coup mainly because of the dismissal of Li, her favourite statesman. S. Spector, in his study of Li, op. cit. 265-6, makes no mention of the British role in the dismissal of Li Hung-chang.

[66] The Times, 26 Nov. 1898, p. 11, col. 3-4, leading article; North China Herald 26 Sept. 1898, p. 569-70, col. 2-3, leading article, and 3 Oct. 1898, p. 625, col. 1-3. In MacDonald tel. to F.O., 11 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1341, he assured the Foreign Office that there was "No reason to suspect foreign influence."

[67] The Times 23 Nov. 1898, p. 11, col. 4, and 26 Nov. 1898, p. 6, col. 3-4, where glowing accounts are given of his career; MacDonald to F.O. 28 Sept. 1898, FO 17/1336.

MacDonald concluding that Li Hung-chang must have been the instigator of this move, immediately addressed a letter to him, pointing out "the horror with which such sudden executions is regarded by all Western nations, and the bad effect the secret and hasty condemnation of an official of Chang's rank, who was so well-known in Europe, would produce," and he urged Li to try and prevent the executions.[68] As a result of this intervention, Chang was not summarily punished, but banished instead to Chinese Turkestan (by Edict of 29 September) where he died in 1900 during the Boxer troubles. MacDonald's action was warmly approved by the Foreign Office and the English press.[69]

It was next K'ang Yu-wei's turn to enjoy British intervention on his behalf. Action was initiated by the Acting Consul in Shanghai, Byron Brenan, who facilitated K'ang's flight from Peking after the failure of the reform movement. Subsequently the British Colonial administrators in Hong Kong and Singapore were to afford him exceptional protective measures when he found shelter in these colonies. Having done that, however, the British came under fire from three sources: from the Chinese Government for harbouring one who to them was a gross traitor and criminal; from certain European Powers who felt that Britain was interfering in the internal affairs of China; and from the sympathetic English press who thought that Britain had not gone far enough if she was to demonstrate that she was a supporter of reform in China. The situation was complicated

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[68] MacDonald to F.O., 28 Sept. 1898, ibid.

[69] London and China Express 23 Sept. 1898, p. 829, col. 1-2; North China Herald 26 Sept. 1898, p. 569-70, col. 2-3; F.O. to MacDonald, 23 Nov. 1898, FO 17/1332, : "I approve representations which you made to Li Hung-chang on behalf of Chang Yin-huan...."

on the one hand by the energetic attempts of the Empress-Dowager to effect the capture of K'ang and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and any other reformers, by whatever means available, often quite ruthless; and on the other by the well-publicised campaign of K'ang Yu-wei, who having got free of his captors, sought British help in ousting the Empress-Dowager and restoring the Emperor to power, using as his chief argument that if Britain did not step in soon, Russia would. The formation of his Pao-huang Tang (Protect Emperor Society) was for this purpose.[70]

The first person who made it possible for K'ang to escape when the "Hundred Days" was over was the Emperor himself. In an order sent to K'ang through Yang Jui on 16 September, the Emperor said:[71]

> "I, the Emperor, think that in times as dangerous and difficult as the present, China can only be saved by the adoption of Western methods, and that Western methods can only be adopted if the conservative, staunch old officers be dismissed, but in this the Empress Dowager does not agree with me.
>
> I have represented this to her many times, but she only becomes the more angry. At present my seat is not secure. I hope that you and the others of the same way of thinking will quickly and secretly contrive a means of assistance. I am very anxious and ill at ease."

On the 18th, another secret letter was given to K'ang, this time in urgent tones:

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[70] See "Pao Huang Tang" in Hu Ssu-ching (ed) "Kuo-wen Pei-ch'eng" in WHPF IV, 278-9; Tseng Yu-hao, op.cit. 61; M. E. Cameron, The Reform Movement in China (New York 1931) 183; Wu Tse, "Pao Huang Tang yü K'ang-Liang Lu-hsien" in Chung-kuo Chien She VII, 1 (Oct. 1948) 44-7; J. Schrecker, "Pao Kuo Hui, a reform society of 1898" in Harvard University, Papers on China XIV (Dec. 1960).

[71] The two Edicts are seen in Su Ch'i-chu "Ch'ing-t'ing Wu-shü chao-pien chi" in WHPF I, 343-4; Tso Shun-sheng (ed) Chung-kuo chin-pai nien shih-chih-liao ch'i-pien (Shanghai 1933) II, 421-2; See also A. H. Smith China in Convulsion (New York 1901), 148: Brenan to F.O., Sept. 1898, FO 17/1718; The Times 7 Oct. 1898, P. 3, col. 1; London and China Express 7 Oct. 1898, p. 867, col. 1-2.

> "I now send you to manage an official newspaper. I have causes of deep distress from which there is no escape - deeper than writing can express. You had better go quickly. I know your affection for me. Look out for your own safety. Use greater endeavours in the cause of good government. Such is my hope."

Even then, K'ang hesitated to leave; but when he heard that the Empress-Dowager was returning to the Palace, he realized that it spelt the end of the movement. The Empress was back on 19th September. On the same day, K'ang went to see Timothy Richard, who helped to put him on a train to Tientsin, from whence he boarded a British steamer, the "Chungking" bound for Hong Kong via Shanghai. Meanwhile, Richard telegraphed the news to the British authorities at Shanghai. On 23 September, Brenan received a Note from the Shanghai taotai informing him that he had secret instructions to arrest K'ang Yu-wei upon his arrival in Shanghai. The taotai told Brenan that K'ang was accused of having given His Majesty certain drugs which proved fatal. The taotai thereupon requested that all British ships arriving from Tientsin should be searched for the fugitive. While Brenan was yet awaiting instructions as to what answer he was to give, a British steamer, the "El Dorado" arrived, and it was stopped by a Chinese launch and searched. This was done without the warrant of the British authorities, and it so irked Brenan that he decided to take matters into his own hands. He protested to the taotai for this act of illegality, meanwhile having made up his mind that when the "Chungking" arrived, it would not be subjected to a search. The Chinese police and detectives at Shanghai were in a high state of excitement, knowing that the reformer was bound to arrive soon, and that they would get the reward of $2,000 offered for his capture by the Empress Dowager on 23 September. Acting on his own initiative, MacDonald being absent

from Peking, Brenan then formulated a plan to protect the Chinese reformer from his would-be captors. It happened that the "Chungking's" wharf was in the French Settlement, and this made it difficult to protect. So Brenan decided to intercept the steamer outside Wusung, and put K'ang on to another vessel. Early on the 24th, Brenan accepted the services of the Times correspondent in Shanghai, J. O. P. Bland, and sent him on a launch which intercepted the "Chungking". The Shanghai taotai had given Brenan a photograph of K'ang for identification, and with this Bland managed to find the reformer, and removed him to the P. & O. liner "Ballaarat", with a British man-of-war, the "Esk" as convoy. Under heavy guard, the "Ballaarat" remained in Wusung until the 27th, when it sailed off for Hong Kong, still under convoy. Thus did K'ang Yu-wei owe his life to the British authorities.[72]

Henry Cockburn, the Chinese Secretary at the Legation in Peking, happened to be travelling on the same ship from Shanghai to Hong Kong, so that during the voyage he managed to elicit from K'ang information regarding affairs in China, which was of a nature not generally known to the British Government. The British Consul-General at Shanghai, Sir Frederick S. A. Bourne (1854-1940) also had an interview with K'ang when the vessel was lying at Wusung, and from their reports the Foreign Office was able to conclude that, though Britain was responsible for saving the life of K'ang Yu-wei, it was too much to ask that she should fall in with

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[72] K'ang Yu-wei, op.cit. 26b; Soothill, op.cit. 240; E. MacGregor (Commander-in-chief, H. M. Ships, China) to F.O., 30 Nov. 1898, in FO 17/1718; The Times 24 Sept. 1898, p. 5, col. 2; Lo Jung-pang, op.cit. 127-31; Wang Shu-huai, op.cit. 179-86. J.O.P. Bland (1863-1945) joined the Chinese Imperial Maritimes Customs in 1883, and was for two years private secretary to Sir Robert Hart. In 1896 he became Secretary to the Municipality for the Foreign Settlements in Shanghai. He was the Times correspondent at Shanghai 1897-1907; at Peking 1907-1910. See Cyril Pearl, Morrison of Peking (Australia, 1967) 139.

his grandiose plans for restoring the Emperor by means of British assistance.

During his conversation with Bourne on board the "Ballaarat" on 25 September, K'ang suggested that "two hundred British troops (!) (sic) would be sufficient to reinstate him (the Emperor) for which he and the whole of China would be ever grateful to England." After the meeting Bourne felt that K'ang "had evidently been carried away by enthusiasm for Western methods and stuffed up with nonsense by Timothy Richard. But I am convinced that K'ang had committed no crime, and the reinstallation of the Empress is a retrograde step, and to the advantage of Russia."[73] During the interviews with Cockburn when they travelled together to Hong Kong, K'ang gave the latter rather incredible reports of the illtreatment of the Emperor by the Empress-Dowager, of the relations among the high officials, and lastly of the immoral character of the Empress-Dowager. Cockburn summed up his impressions of the reformer:[74]

> "I think he is an enthusiast who can see no obstacles in the way of directly producing any results the Emperor pleases to will. He seems to me the stamp of a man in England who takes up some question, such as abstinence from alcohol, or vegetarianism, and is fully persuaded that an Act of Parliament prohibiting the use of alcohol will at once stop all drinking. He has no conceptions at all of the difficulties in the way of moving men out of the grooves of habit. His belief that the Chinese will readily change their dress is an illustration of this frame of mind. He seems to be a good Chinese scholar and have learnt of foreign countries what can be learnt from books imperfectly understood...

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[73] Enclosed in Brenan to F.O., 26 Sept. 1898, FO 17/1718.

[74] Cockburn's notes of his conversation with K'ang, enclosed in MacDonald's private letter to F. Bertie, 15 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1336; see also MacDonald to F.O. 13 Oct. 1898, ibid, in which he largely agreed with Cockburn's views of the reformer. In a letter to Sir Halliday Macartney, dated October, 1898, a Chinese correspondent wrote: "This man (K'ang) is a very shallow and not deserving the fame he has gained." D. Boulger, The Life of Sir Halliday Macartney (New York 1908) 470.

> The picture he draws of the Emperor is not without some pathos - pathos which always attaches to a man of good intentions for whom circumstances are too strong. I think it is fairly evident the Emperor got carried away by visions of a new China, renovated by his hands, and like K'ang and the others did not see or understand the difficulties in his path ... They move him, I imagine, much as an agitator at home moved the mob: the mob believes the day is coming under which a pint pot shall hold a quart. The Emperor's visions of the future are higher doubtless, and less selfish, but hardly less impractical ... "

These observations were not calculated to raise K'ang's standing in the eyes of the British Government. However, from the Colonial Office came defence of K'ang. Major-General W. Black, administering the government of Hong Kong during the absence of a governor, sent in a confidential despatch after meeting both K'ang and Cockburn in Hong Kong, and evidently having seen the latter's notes of his conversations with the reformer. Black suggested that Cockburn "has formed too contemptuous an estimate of K'ang's projects of reform."[75]

> "I have little doubt that if the Emperor's plans had been laid more wisely and boldly, and if he summoned a regiment of soldiers true to him to the palace before acting, he would have been beforehand with the Empress-Dowager, and have turned the tables on her. Though some of his schemes, such as the reform in dress, were absurd and impractical, some were more wise and reasonable, and no one can deny that there is plenty of scope for reform."

The Foreign Office however had reasons for disagreeing. "But it is just the fact that some of the proposed reforms were absurd and impractical, and that no force was provided beforehand to ensure success, that made Mr. Cockburn form his contemptuous opinion of K'ang Yu-wei."[76]

From another authoritative source came a further condemnation of K'ang's activities. Sir Claude MacDonald informed the Foreign Office

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[75] W. Black to C.O., 8 Oct. 1898, CO 129/285.

[76] F.O. Minutes on C.O. to F.O., (confidential) of 11 Nov. 1898, FO 17/1364.

that "I consider that the cause of true reform in China has been much injured by the injudicious conduct of K'ang and his friends."[77] He also had reason to fear that the failure of the reform movement would have repercussions on Sino-foreign relations for he had learnt that the reaction of the Empress-Dowager's government was now to look with suspicion on all officials who had dealings with foreigners. The Manchus evidently considered that foreigners were responsible for K'ang's views, and consequently distrusted all those who had associated in any way with foreigners.[78] It will be seen that MacDonald's apprehensions were justified.

Whatever their opinion of the reformer, the British now found him on their hands. On arrival at Hong Kong on 30 September, he was met by government officers and offered accommodation at the police barracks as being the safest from assassination.[79] This generous treatment did not escape the notice of K'ang's followers, and on 2 October, a tribute of gratitude from his fellow provincials in Shanghai was addressed to the North China Daily News. The communication included a sheet of letter paper with the words: "We, the people of Kwangtung province, crave permission to express our deep gratitude to their Excellencies the Consuls and the Admiral of the Great Empire of Great Britain for their great kindness to us."[80] A few days later, K'ang moved from the police barracks to stay with his friends, where he remained for two months.

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[77] MacDonald to F.O., 13 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1336.

[78] ibid.

[79] W. Black to C.O., 8 Oct. 1898, CO 129/285; The China Mail of 30 Sept. 1898, P. 3, col. 2-4; Lord C. Beresford, op.cit. 196-9; P. Landon, "An Interview with K'ang Yu-wei" in China Mail 7 Oct. 1898, p. 3, col. 1-6; Mei Ying, "Wu-hsü cheng-pien chen-wen" in Jen-wen Yüeh-k'an VII, 10 (Dec. 1936) 1-6.

[80] North China Herald 3 Oct. 1898, p. 647, col. 2.

Meanwhile, conditions in Peking continued to remain uncertain, and rumours of all sorts reached the outside world. They were given wide publicity in the English press, and an epitome of the more sensational ones was reported in the Peking and Tientsin Times of 8 October, 1898.[81] An interesting survey of the situation came from Bredon (later Sir Robert), deputy Inspector-General of the Maritime Customs. He found that the situation was generally accepted by everybody in Peking. The Manchus were everywhere ascendant as far as important official posts were concerned, and this would mean little chance of future progress in the administration. He felt that Jung-lu (the man whom the reformers blamed most for the coup d'etat) was rather more pro-English than his colleagues, and observed that the Chinese suspicion and distrust of Russia seemed to be growing, while a willingness to accept English help on conditions, was a sentiment coming to the front. A very high authority had told him recently: "China would have put herself absolutely under English guidance any time during the last twenty years in return for a guarantee against the aggression of other nations."[82] Bredon personally felt that at that juncture, the Chinese government might offer to put itself under British

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[81] Peking and Tientsin Times 8 Oct. 1898, p. 128, col. 2. Some of the rumours included stories of the Emperor effecting his escape from the Palace, disguised as K'ang Yu-wei's servant, and that he had now gone to Hong Kong; a British guard being sent to Peking (in connection with the attack on foreigners) was in reality the first of some 2,000 troops which it was intended to send to the capital in detachments; Admiral Seymour (of Britain) had been ordered to seize all the Chinese vessels and the Customs Houses if the recent demands made by the British Government of the Tsungli-yamen were not compiled with; and, finally, Li Hung-chang and the Empress-Dowager were reported to have been married and on their way to Tientsin. The Russian Minister was supposed to be jubilant.

[82] Bredon to Bertie (private) of 26 Dec. 1898, FO 17/1365.

tutelage, in return for something between an alliance and a protectorate; on the other hand, Bredon was not certain if the British Government would want to shoulder the responsibility " ... but there is always one consolation here - it is not only the unexpected but the apparently impossible that often happens!"[83] Even so, Bredon's far-fetched proposal did not seem to have been taken seriously by the authorities in London. Sir Claude MacDonald in fact, has long been of the opinion that though demoralised, the Chinese Government would still be too arrogant to want to follow foreign advice, let alone foreign tutelage. "With the fatalism of the Oriental, they will prefer to bow to the storm if it must come, rather than voluntarily put themselves under the control of any foreigners, however friendly. They do not believe in our alleged motives .... "[84]

The seeming hopelessness of the Chinese state after the reform fiasco also drew the attention of the former Japanese Prime Minister, Marquis Ito Hirobumi (1841-1909), a leading force in the Meiji Restoration, who visited China in September, 1898. It was generally believed that his mission was an attempt to further the reform movement in China, he being a source of inspiration for K'ang and many of the other reformers.[85] Now

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[83] ibid. K'ang Yu-wei, of course, was a staunch advocate of friendship with and reliance on Great Britain. See his references to the trustworthiness of the British in Lo Jung-pang, op.cit. 81-2, 128.

[84] MacDonald to F.O., 28 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1337.

[85] K'ang Yu-wei had been keenly interested in the Meiji reforms in Japan since 1886, when he wrote to Chang Chih-tung to propose a programme of translating Japanese works. The arrival of Ito in Peking was therefore viewed with much hope and enthusiasm by K'ang and the other reformers. Japan, of course, was soon to serve as an important asylum for all the fleeing reformers from China. See Richard C. Howard, "Japan's Role in the Reform Program of K'ang Yu-wei" in Lo Jung-pang, op.cit. 280-302; M.B. Jansen, The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen (Cambridge, Mass. 1954) 74-77; Wang Shu-huai, op.cit. 157-204. A typical reformer's impression of Ito is written by T. Richard, "The late Prince Ito" in The Chinese Recorder XL (Nov. 1909) 640-1.

that the reactionaries were back in power, Ito admitted that he despaired of progress in China. In Peking, he had found no statesman, no man willing to take responsibility, no one standing conspicuously above his fellows.[86] While in Peking, Ito was granted an audience with the Emperor on 20 September. Kuang-hsü intended it to be a discussion of reform methods for China; but the Empress-Dowager had already returned to the capital and insisted on being present at the interview, hidden behind a screen and unknown to the visitor. It was no wonder therefore that the Emperor could only touch upon general topics with Ito, and it further added to the disappointment of the Japanese statesman. To the British, it was felt that if real confidence had been established between the two Oriental countries, and the interview between the Emperor and Ito conducted more cordially without the restraining influence of the Empress-Dowager, better things might have been hoped for.[87] By this time, all British hopes, missionary or otherwise, for rapid modernization in China were dashed; K'ang Yu-wei alone seemed to be undiscouraged, and continued canvassing energetically for British aid in restoring the Emperor.

The position of the Emperor Kuang-hsü was one of the difficulties facing the British Government after the coup d'etat. Since the return of the Empress-Dowager, he was practically a prisoner in the Palace. As the excitement subsided, and the Chinese capital settled back into its

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[86] See The Times of 26 Nov. 1898, p. 11, col. 6, for reports of an interview with the Marquis.

[87] Bax-Ironside to F.O., 28 Mar. 1899, FO 17/1373; and 15 April, 1899, ibid, containing J.B. Eames' account of the interview. Part of the conversation between the Emperor and Ito is given in S.Y. Teng and J.K. Fairbank, op.cit. 179-180; and in Chang Lu-tzu (trans.) "Wu-hsü cheng-pien ti tang-shih" in WHPF III, 569-70.

"pristine, lethargic, know-nothing condition"[88] foreign observers were generally agreed that although the Emperor's measures were too radical and premature, there was no doubting his genuine desire for reform. The Emperor and his party must have been blinded by enthusiasm; or, as it was often felt, perhaps the Emperor had sensed impending danger, and had rushed his reform schemes with a recklessness impelled by the realization that his time was short. "Deficient though he may have been in judgment and knowledge of the world, the Emperor had intelligence enough to perceive that drastic reform, reform that should go to the root of things, is the only remedy for the decay that is everywhere apparent."[89] So when rumours began reaching the outside world that the Empress intended doing away with him, or even that he was already dead by the time the Empress assumed control, even the most impartial observer felt that this could not be tolerated. It was urged that the Manchu Government should not be allowed to "hoodwink" the world for days on end, and the North China Daily News demanded that the foreign Ambassadors in Peking should strive to know the truth, to determine whether the man to whom they were commissioned was still alive.[90]

In this respect Sir Claude MacDonald had indeed not been idle. On 3 October, 1898, he telegraphed confidentially to the Foreign Office, relating a report he had from fairly reliable authority that the Emperor was to be put to death in a few days time by the Empress-Dowager. He desired instructions on a line of action if the rumour proved to be true.[91] The reply

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[88] Peking and Tientsin Times 1 Oct. 1898, p. 123, col. 2.

[89] The Times of Nov. 1898, p. 7, col. 1-2; See also the North China Herald of 10 Oct. 1898, p. 669, col. 1-3, p. 670, col. 1.

[90] Peking and Tientsin Times 24 Sept. 1898, p. 119, col. 2-3, leading article; Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, in WHPF I, 255-6, 305-7, where he describes the treatment of the Emperor by the Empress-Dowager; see also Shinshu Nakakuki, Man-Ch'ing hsien-shih mi-mi shih (Shanghai n.d.) 7b-8b.

[91] MacDonald tel. to F.O., 13 Oct. 1898 FO 17/1339.

drafted and telegraphed to MacDonald was at the instance of Lord Salisbury himself:[92]

> "A joint representation by the foreign representatives of the very dangerous impression which would be produced by the assassination of the Emperor seems only expedient. It would be important in that case that other Powers should act in entire accord with us, and Russia should seem to take the initiative. We are suspect after having shielded the principal culprit from arrest."

Salisbury's policy of caution was not without grounds. The action of the British Government in the reform coup had indeed come under strong fire, at least from one eloquent direction. The Cologne Gazette on 4 October launched a fierce attack against the British Government for having interfered in the internal affairs of China in supporting K'ang Yu-wei, and the English missionaries for having aided the reformers, especially in the two Kwang provinces. Because it was believed the British had sought and obtained the degradation of Li Hung-chang, the consequence was that the Palace and Government in Peking became alarmed, and had resort to "a measure not uncommon in Eastern lands - a Palace revolution," and thus the responsibility for the whole coup d'etat was neatly laid at the door of the British government.[93] However, anxiety regarding the uncertain situation of the Emperor was shared by all the other Foreign Powers interested in China[94] whether critical of

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[92] F.O. tel, to MacDonald, 14 Oct. 1898, 17/1339.

[93] The Times of 4 Oct. 1898, p. 3, col. 1, from their Berlin correspondent. In its leader, p. 7, col. 3-4, the paper defends the Government as having upheld its principle of never interfering in the internal affairs of other states, though British sympathies as a free and progressive people were naturally with reform. Giving santuary to K'ang was consistent with its policy which led to the sheltering of German refugees of both parties in London just after the events of 1848, and also of French Royalists, Imperialists and Republicans when they were exiles during the last century. The Editorial made it clear that if K'ang had carried out a moderate scheme of reforms, they would doubtless have been good for China, and therefore also good for China's chief customer. As it was, K'ang did not seem to have possessed any of the practical qualities that go to make a successful statesman, to say nothing of a successful reformer.

[94] MacDonald tel. F.O., 14 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1341.

British policy or not, and it was due to MacDonald's initiative that the matter was made clear for them once and for all. Acting on his instructions, he made no official statement to the Tsungli-yamen; but being aware of the wild rumours floating about, Prince Ch'ing assured MacDonald on 15 October, that they were not true, that the Emperor was enjoying better health than usual, and then confidentially asked MacDonald's advice as to the best means of quieting the agitation. This was an opening not often proffered; MacDonald made the bold suggestion that the Emperor should be examined by a foreign physician, whose certificate on the state of his health would then have a very reassuring effect. Inwardly though, MacDonald felt there was little chance of his advice being followed.[95]

But he was surprised on the 17th to receive actual enquiries from the Prince and some ministers of the yamen as to the foreign doctors resident in Peking. Unfortunately the British Legation doctor was away on home leave, so MacDonald recommended the French physician, M. Detheve. The Emperor was duly visited on the 18th, in the presence of the Empress-Dowager, and a medical bulletin made out by the Frenchman. MacDonald then took the initiative again and suggested to the Tsungli-yamen that the bulletin should be officially communicated to the doyen of the Diplomatic Body, as this would place the affair on record, and make it public. His advice was again immediately put into effect. This unusual departure from tradition, in which the person of the Emperor was directly involved, was perhaps a small yet significant manifestation of the extent of British influence in Peking, fostered no doubt by the energetic and straightforward diplomacy of Sir Claude MacDonald. He himself observed that "The Chinese high officials, and I think I may say, the Empress-Dowager, have shown

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[95] MacDonald tel of 16 October 1898, ibid.

in this matter considerable eagerness to propitiate foreign opinion."[96]

This was not to say that the Empress-Dowager had now embarked on an enlightened policy with regard to her government of the country, one which the foreign Powers hoped to see. On the contrary, having put to death six of the reformers directly involved in the "Hundred Days" movement on 28 September, 1898,[97] she began an intensive search for all the others who had fled her grasp, and who were mostly enjoying foreign protection either in the British colonies adjacent to China, or in the foreign settlement at Shanghai. In particular, she desired the capture of the leaders K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao by whatever means she could. In trying to effect this, she ran up against the traditional British principle of protecting political refugees under her flag,[98] the more so since having participated in K'ang's flight in September, the British Government could not now hand him over without causing an outcry among the many sympathisers of reform in and out of China. As it was, much anxiety was voiced as to what the British now proposed to do, Peking being once more in the control of unprogressive reactionaries. A manifestation of a clear conception of policy, and the energy and firmness with which to pursue it was generally desired; it was agreed that "the government seems to have taken a strong line with regard to sheltering

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[96]MacDonald to F.O., 28 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1337, and tel, of 29 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1341. An account of the doctor's visit is seen in Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, op.cit. Chapter 3, chuan 2, also in WHPF I, 263-6; Wang Shu-huai op.cit. 212-7.

[97]Their biographies are given in "K'ang Yu-wei teng-jen chuan-ch'i" in WHPF IV, 49-73; the six included K'ang's brother K'ang Kuang-jen.

[98]An important precedent had been established in the case of Wang T'ao, a journalist accused of betraying the Ch'ing Government during the Taiping Rebellion, who was assisted by the British in escaping from Shanghai to Hong Kong in October 1862. See Paul A. Cohen, "Wang T'ao's Perspective on a Changing World" in A. Feuerwerker, et. al. (ed) Approaches to Modern Chinese History (California 1967) 135.

K'ang Yu-wei, and we may hope that it is indicable of its resolve at this time."[99]

The sheltering of K'ang by the British was doubtlessly a constant source of irritation to the Empress-Dowager. It was suggested that her ire was redoubled considering the part accredited to the British Government in bringing about the dismissal of Li Hung-chang early in September, 1898.[100] The situation was not made easier by the fact that everywhere he travelled, K'ang and his colleagues were loud in their demands for British aid in overthrowing the Empress-Dowager. On 31 October, 1898, a petition signed by a number of scholar-literati was handed in to the British Consul-General at Shanghai, urging that a telegram be sent to the Foreign Office asking for active British assistance in restoring the Emperor, and suggesting that while the conservatives at Peking looked to Russia for support, the reformers placed their reliance on Great Britain.[101] Then in November, the Officer Administering the Government in Hong Kong, W. Black, also received a petition, this time signed by the gentry of Kwangsi, again asking for his cooperation: he should telegraph to the Foreign Office to take steps in protecting the reformers and reinstating the Emperor. They based their pleas on the friendship existing between China and Britain, and the fact that Britain had proved sympathetic towards European revolutions in the past. A few days later, Black received a letter from K'ang Yu-wei himself, much along the same lines; but including an attack on the person of the Empress-Dowager, as well as suggesting that troops

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[99] London and China Express 30 Sept. 1898, p. 845, col. 2, leading article.

[100] London and China Express 23 Sept. 1898, p. 829, col. 1-2.

[101] London and China Express 30 Dec. 1898, p. 3, col. 1-2.

be dispatched to restore the Emperor.[102] To all these "quaint effusions"[103] the British Government deigned to pay no notice.

From Hong Kong, K'ang Yu-wei went in November 1898 to Japan, and immediately an edict was issued on 5 December, with special instructions to the Chinese Minister in Japan to watch out for him.[104] From Japan, K'ang journeyed to England and Canada. In both places, he gave long and detailed public addresses, stressing repeatedly the responsibility of Great Britain in "saving" the Emperor. He arrived in England in June 1899, and made it public that his avowed purpose was to induce the British Government to help him. He criticised the British Government for their lack of knowledge regarding conditions in China, and insisted that it was in Britain's own interests to interfere in China, as the "Emperor spelt friendship for England and reform, and the regime of the Empress spelt Russian influence and reaction." It only needed a decisive intimation by a foreign power to the Tsungli-yamen, he claimed, and the Emperor might be reseated on the throne.[105] In Canada, where he established a branch of his Pao-huang Tang in July, 1899, he was again reported as saying,[106]

> "he considered Britain the best possible friend and protector of China, but although acknowledging his indebtness personally for their help in

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[102] W. Black to C.O., 17 Nov. 1898, CO 129/286, and C.O. to F.O., 17/1398. The petition is also published in the Times of 25 April, 1899, p. 6, col. 2-3.

[103] A term used by Fiddian at the F.O. in a minute on C.O. to F.O. 6 Jan. 1899, FO 17/1398.

[104] The Edict is seen in "Shang-yü san-i-liu t'iao" in WHPF II, 112.

[105] The Times, 8 June 1899, p. 10, col. 1; London and China Express 16 June 1899, p. 444, col. 1-2.

[106] An interview with K'ang in Canada by Mr. Archibald Little, an enterprising businessman working in China, reported in the North China Herald of 25 Sept. 1899, p. 631, col. 1-3. K'ang struck Little as being "the best informed Chinese I have ever met." His travels are documented in Lo Jung-pang, op.cit. 178-82.

> escaping, he complained bitterly of the apathy of our officials generally .... Had Britain understood the facts, and had the British Minister in Peking been properly informed upon what was going on in the Palace, which he certainly was not, he might have held out a helping hand and without risk to himself, have saved the young Emperor ...."

While K'ang criticised the British Government for its lack of knowledge of Chinese affairs, he himself was perhaps equally guilty of ignorance: in view of England's world-wide responsibilities and of the contingencies involved, there could be no doubt that Britain had little intention of meddling in the affairs of China, however much the British would wish to see China reformed, and however much K'ang and his colleagues demanded it. The difficulties of offering him safe residence in the British colonies of Hong Kong and Singapore were to cause trouble enough, as will be seen in the next chapter.

Yet despite his irresponsible utterances, K'ang Yu-wei and the movement he represented did seem to win a considerable amount of public sympathy abroad. This was enhanced of course, by reports everywhere of the reactionary conditions in Peking under the administration of the Manchu conservatives, and of the Empress-Dowager's ruthless attempts to persecute all those who had any association with the reform movement. Admittedly the British Government need have no concern with the internal conditions of China, the Court intrigues, the plots and counter-plots which mark the frequent struggles for mastery within the Palace. So long as British treaty rights were respected, and the trader allowed a fair field for his enterprise, the British Government would deem to be satisfied. Yet Britain's experience in China had shown that the internal conditions of the government in China never failed to react on foreign trade, and it had often been found necessary that the observance of

existing treaties depended largely upon the political pressure brought to bear on the Chinese authorities. For this reason, the British had long been interested in movements promoting liberal reform and domestic consolidation, and had always worked for the strengthening of China from within. Hence the importance of maintaining British influence in Peking. And hence the dissatisfaction felt when it seemed to many that the Foreign Office had now abandoned this principle with regard to the retrograde regime of the Empress-Dowager, and that it condoned her practice of steadily replacing Chinese officials by Manchus in all the important political posts of the Empire. It was also known that the foreign Legations now found renewed difficulty in dealing with the central government, for the powerful advisers surrounding the throne tended to prevent true details of the Empire's international relations from reaching the highest authority. As a consequence the Palace was led to believe that all foreigners were to be distrusted without distinction of nationality. No improvements could thus be made in such circumstances, there being no one of sufficient power to proclaim the disagreeable truth to the throne.[107]

This emergence of an anti-foreign feeling in Peking was one of the consequences of the coup that Sir Claude MacDonald had feared, and he was to see it take actual form. On 30 September, 1898, a number of foreigners, including a Mr. Mortimore of the British Legation, were attacked in the southern city of Peking by a street crowd.[108]

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[107] The Times of 26 Nov. 1898, p. 11, col. 3-4, leading article; Bax-Ironside to F.O., 17 April, 1899, FO 17/1373 and 29 May 1899, FO 17/1374, in which he reports that there were 62 Viceroys, Governors, Treasurers and Judges of the 18 provinces and the New Dominions. 24 of the posts were held by Manchus, whereas before the coup only 13 of them were so occupied.

[108] MacDonald tel. F.O. 1 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1341.

The incident itself was unimportant, but it was generally believed that during the unrest following the execution of the six reformers, the common people supposed that their deaths were ordered by the Empress-Dowager because they had had dealings with foreigners, and it was therefore considered safe to insult foreigners in every possible way. So great was the anxiety felt by the foreign Legations about the incident that the Diplomatic Body agreed to send for their Legation guards, despite the entreaties of the Tsungli-yamen that the presence of these guards would only serve to excite popular feeling.[109] The guards were withdrawn after some three weeks; but the incident was another set-back to the improved diplomatic relations with the Chinese Government that MacDonald sought to secure during his tenure of office.[110]

In the main, the British Government was not generally regarded as having done well through the reform crisis of 1898. It was unfortunate that during the few crucial days when the coup d'etat took place, Sir Claude MacDonald was away from Peking on a visit to Pei-ta Ho, where the British fleet was assembled. This afforded Jung-lu an opportunity to circulate a report that the British were going to seize the forts at Taku and then march by way of Tientsin on Peking. To meet this supposed

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[109] MacDonald to F.O., 11 Oct. 1898, FO 17/1336,

[110] In relation to the bringing up of Legation guards, there was another suspicious incident which led MacDonald to believe that the Chinese Government was attempting to play off one Legation against another. A report was circulated that it was due entirely to MacDonald's initiative that the guards were sent for, and that the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, M. Pavlov, was alleged to have expressed his opinion that he was personally averse to the measure, and had thought it a great mistake. This was completely opposed to Pavlov's views at the meetings of the Diplomatic Body, and MacDonald hastened to question him about it. The Russian denied having made any statement of the kind, and MacDonald was inclined to believe him. See MacDonald to F.O. 12 Oct. 1898, ibid.

emergency, Jung-lu had General Nieh Shih-ch'eng, a commander under Li Hung-chang, bring up five thousand men from his camp at Lutai, and this was done in a single night to demonstrate the urgency of the matter.[111] Thus unknowingly, the British Minister seemed to have facilitated the cause of the reactionaries against the reformers. The absence of MacDonald at such an important moment thus became the focal point of criticism directed against the British Government for their handling of the situation. It was suggested that the foreign representatives at Peking, and the British in particular, had no inkling of the events brewing in China, and that Sir Claude was alleged to have admitted that he had never heard of K'ang Yu-wei until his escape.[112] As a consequence of lack of information, the Foreign Office was accused of having "no policy" in China as far as the reform movement was concerned. Lord Salisbury was charged with "criminal inaction" and his "incapacity or cowardice" had accomplished a blow to British prestige and caused the British Government to remain the laughing-stock of other nations. According to the North China Herald, this was especially unforgiveable in view of the fact that the British had for years taken the lead in urging on the Chinese the claims of enlightenment and progress, and had endeavoured to convince them that only by the introduction of reforms could the integrity and independence of China, which were the rallying points of British policy in the Far East, be preserved. And now they seemed to have turned around and condoned the retrograde administration of the Empress-Dowager, which was a support of

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[111] Contained in J.B. Eames' account of the coup d'etat, in Bax-Ironside to F.O., 15 April 1899, FO 17/1373.

[112] North China Herald 14 Nov. 1898, p. 890, col. 1-3, leading article. See note 26.

"barbarism" in preference to "reform".[113]

The same charges, though voiced in less violent language, were reflected in a debate in the House of Commons on 9 June, 1899. Sir E. Sassoon, (member for Hythe), deplored the government's countenance given to the usurpation of the throne by the Empress-Dowager. It was suggested that MacDonald should have dissociated himself from the rest of the Diplomatic Body, and thus abstained from acknowledging the "machinations of an oligarchy mainly composed of corrupt and besotted reactionaries."[114] Mr. Moon (St. Pancras) also expressed his regret that the Legation was not better informed of the events taking place in China, an absence of which have now endangered British credit in allowing the coup to take place, instead of supporting the reform party.[115]

It was certainly true that the British Legation, and even more so, the Foreign Office in London, had little expected that the reform decrees which began appearing in January 1898 would so rapidly lead to a show-down between the two contending forces in Peking. When the early edicts were published, British official reaction was one of satisfaction and a placid wait-and-see attitude. It was a good beginning, they felt; they expected the movement to spread over a period of time before the practical effects would be apparent. They did not realize the urgency which caused the Emperor to rush through his decrees while the Empress-Dowager was still away from Peking. Then, it was also a fact that Sir

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[113] North China Herald, 7 Nov. 1898, p. 841, col. 2-3, leading article. Also see the same paper of 17 Oct. 1898, p. 715-6, col. 1-3, and 24 Oct. 1898, p. 763, col. 3, 764, col. 1-2; The Times of 30 Sept. 1898, p. 7, col. 4, leading article.

[114] Parliamentary Debates LXXII, 9 June 1899, 824-5.

[115] Parliamentary Debates LXXII, 9 June 1899, 824-5, 842; Times 10 June 1899, pp. 8-9.

Claude MacDonald had not taken the movement very seriously to heart, as his despatches of the period show. It was perhaps an exaggeration to say that he had not heard of K'ang's name before September, 1898; but undoubtedly he had little sympathy to spare for K'ang and his followers after they had become outlaws of the Chinese Government.[116] In a speech at a dinner party, giving his account of the coup, Sir Claude insisted that K'ang was only an enthusiastic dreamer, who believed that the whole of the Chinese Empire could be reformed by edicts; he stressed the fact that the Empress-Dowager's eagerness to capture K'ang was not so much for his reform activities, but for the fact that he had plotted to do away with her, and so he was a true rebel in the eyes of the Chinese Government. MacDonald felt that the Empress, a clever woman, and by no means opposed to reforms, simply stepped in and managed affairs when the Emperor was unable to do so.[117] This was a lenient attitude to take towards the reactionary triumph, one which not many foreigners at the time would share with MacDonald.

At another reception given in his honour by the China Association in London, on 28 September, 1899, MacDonald, defending his handling of the crisis, now blamed both the British Government at home for lack of support, and the pessimistic tone of public opinion in England. British influence in China had not really suffered as much as was often alleged, he claimed, because of the occurrence of the reform coup d'etat. As for his personal attitudes, he once again demonstrated that he had always

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[116] Lo Jung-pang, op. cit. 255-6, claims that MacDonald was at first favourable toward the reform movement, but his views changed drastically after the coup d'etat.

[117] London and China Express 23 Dec. 1898, p. 1076, col. 2.

desired a forceful policy in China. Citing as example the question of piracy on the West River, he had suggested to the Tsungli-yamen that "hanging an official, the higher the better - I mean the higher the official - a Viceroy for choice, was the best and only way."[118] This was fairly typical of Sir Claude MacDonald and in line with what he felt towards British participation in the reforms of China. Taking the Chinese Army for instance, he was certain that the minute the British had helped them to reorganise it, they would "kick us all out of China, lock stock and barrel."[119] Whatever changes Britain desired could, according to MacDonald, "only be brought about by horse, foot and artillery, and that's the long and the short of it."[120]

It was perhaps fortunate that Lord Salisbury was in charge of the Foreign Office in London, who on many occasions he managed to counterbalance MacDonald's militant policies with realism and caution. Britain's handling of the reform movement of 1898 has been variously charged with timidity, excessive interference in Chinese affairs, loss of prestige for Britain, or lack of support for the reformers. Nevertheless the crisis was tided over without undue strain on the relatively smooth relations between China and Britain during this period of the "Scramble for concessions." The repercussions of the reform movement, however, continued to influence Britain's policies in China, especially as they affected Colonial policies in Hong Kong and Singapore, where the fugitive reformers sought asylum.

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[118] Peking and Tientsin Times 11 Nov. 1899, supplement col. 2-3; and The Times 29 Sept. 1899, p. 7, col. 3-4, leader.

[119] MacDonald to Bertie (private) of 3 Feb. 1899, FO 17/1372.

[120] ibid. British aid in the reform of the Chinese military was a favoured platform of Lord Charles Beresford, (1846-1919) who visited China on a special mission at the request of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of Britain in 1898-99. See C. Beresford, The Break-up of China (London 1899); on this occasion, MacDonald's views appeared to have prevailed at the Foreign Office: someone minuted, "C.B. has wind in the head."

CHAPTER IV

THE ABORTIVE UPRISINGS OF 1900-3 AND BRITISH COLONIAL ATTITUDES

1900 was the year of the Boxer Rebellion which ravaged the Northern provinces of China.[1] Both the reformers of K'ang Yu-wei's group and Sun Yat-sen's revolutionaries sought to use the opportunity presented, when the attention of the Manchu government was drawn to activities in the North, to make a bid for insurrection in Central and Southern China. There were thus two separate movements in that year, the reformers rising in Hankow, and the revolutionaries in Waichow in Kwangtung. Prior to this, there had been some attempts at cooperation between the two movements, with the revolutionaries taking the initiative nearly every time, and K'ang Yu-wei persistently holding aloof. When these overtures for amalgamation failed to yield practicable results, the two camps then decided to strike out each for its own cause.

As early as 1895, Sun Yat-sen had hoped to gain the friendship of K'ang Yu-wei. K'ang was teaching in Canton, and Sun having heard of his reform ideas, sent word to the scholar that he wanted to meet him. K'ang replied that he was willing only if Sun applied formally to become a pupil of his. This haughty attitude thus prevented the two Chinese leaders from

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[1] Some recent studies of the Boxer Movement include Chien Po-tsan, et. al. (ed) I-ho T'uan (Shanghai 1953) 4 vols.; Tai Hsuan-chih, I-ho T'uan yen-chiu (Taiwan 1963); J. Ch'en, "The Nature and Characterisitics of the Boxer Movement," in Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, XXIII, Pt. 2, 287-308; V. W. Purcell, The Boxer Uprising, a Background Study (Cambridge 1963); see also Sir Claude MacDonald, "Some Personal Reminiscences of the Siege of the Peking Legations in 1900", a speech made on 25 March 1914 to the Royal United Service Institution, in Journal of the Royal United Service Institution LIX, (August 1914) 1-45 (by courtesy of Mrs. J. Fahie of Suffolk, England.)

exchanging references on that occasion. Meanwhile, in Hong Kong, Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai was also trying to form an alliance with the reformers through K'ang Kuang-jen (1867-1898), brother of K'ang Yu-wei, and seemed to have some sort of success. They became firm friends, and by September, 1897, K'ang Kuang-jen promised to broach the subject of cooperation to his brother. He felt that "we should get the superior men of both parties together and hold a conference. We desire to see a peaceful revolution for the good of the Empire and its millions . . ."[2] But it must be remembered that Yang Ch'ü-yün was still chairman of the Hsing Chung Hui at that time, and K'ang and Hsieh were contemplating cooperation without provision for the role of Sun Yat-sen. Therefore it was not surprising that K'ang Kuang-jen stated from the beginning: "Men like Sun Yat-sen frighten me--we cannot combine with such reckless men."[3] K'ang then left for Shanghai, and on 8 November, 1897, informed Hsieh by letter that he had spoken to Liang Ch'i-ch'ao who seemed to favour the idea of cooperation.[4]

At the same time, however, an incident in Japan began to widen the gap between the two groups again. By 1897 the Chinese community in Japan had increased considerably, and Feng Chin-ju, chairman of the Hsing Chung Hui in Japan, decided to establish a Chinese college at Yokohama. No doubt still hoping to win the friendship of the reformers, Sun Yat-sen approached them for

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[2] Hao Yen-p'ing, "The abortive cooperation between Reformers and Revolutionaries, 1895-1900" in Harvard University, Papers on China XV (1961) 94.

[3] Tse Tsan-tai (Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai) The Chinese Republic - Secret History of the Revolution (Hong Kong 1924) 12.

[4] ibid

help in securing teachers for the college. K'ang sent his close follower Hsü Chin to administer the college, and in no time managed to transform it into a centre of reform propaganda. The name of the school was changed from its original "Chung-hsi" to "Ta-tung"[5] and the climax came in October, 1898 after K'ang had arrived in Japan, when notices of "Do not admit Sun Wen" were posted in the school premises.[6]

The issue was also revived in Hong Kong when K'ang and some of his disciples were given refuge after the Hundred Days' Reform Movement. The revolutionaries calculated that with the failure of his movement, and his personal status reduced to that of a political refugee, K'ang would be more susceptible to the idea of a revolution first and reforms after. Ch'en Shao-pai made several attempts to see K'ang, all to no avail. K'ang

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[5] K'ang's Ta-t'ung Shu (One-world Philosophy) was published at about the same time.

[6] Accounts of these early attempts at cooperation are given in Hao Yen-p'ing, op. cit. 93-4; Tse Tsan-tai, op. cit. 10-12; Ch'en Shao-pai, "Hsing Chung Hui ko-ming shih-yao" in Ch'en Te-yün, (ed) Ch'en Shao-pao hsien-sheng ai-ssu-lu (Canton 1934?) 101-101b, 104b-105; also seen in HHKM I, 53-54; Lo Chia-lun (ed) Kuo-fu Sun Chung-shan hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'u-kao (Taipei, 1958) I, 78-79; Wang Ch'i-chü (ed) "Ching-shih ta-hsüeh-t'ang chi ch'i-t'a hsüeh-t'ang" in WHPF IV, 517-520; Chih Kuei, "Ch'ing-tai K'ang-Liang wei-hsin yün-tung yü ko-ming-t'ang chih kuan-hsi chi ying-hsiang" in Chien-kuo Yüeh-k'an IX, 2 (August 1933) 5; Chang Peng-yüan, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao yü Ch'ing-chi ko-ming (Taiwan, 1964) 136-7; Chi Ping-feng, Ch'ing-mo ko-ming yü chün-hsien ti lun-Ch'eng (Taiwan, 1966) 3745 Lo Jung-pang, in K'ang Yu-wei, a Biography and a Symposium (Arizona 1967) 147-8 however, offers evidence that it would have been inconsistent with K'ang's behaviour and aims at that stage to reject cooperation with the revolutionaries, and also that the chief contact man between the two groups, Ch'en Ch'ien-ch'iu, died in February 1895, so that accounts of the frequent liaison between the two groups after this date would have to be reexamined. There is reason for Lo's scepticism, as most works dealing with the subject were written by men sympathetic to Sun's cause. On the other hand, until there is conclusive evidence to the contrary, there is no doubting K'ang Kuang-jen's friendship with Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai.

remained disdainful of the revolutionaries. He remained stubbornly loyal to the Emperor Kuang-hsü, and explained that personal gratitude to the Emperor prevented him from joining any movement harmful to his person.[7]

After this there was no more the revolutionaries could do. Cooperation with the reformers seemed impossible as long as K'ang remained their leader.[8] Yang Ch'ü-yün summed up the situation:[9]

> "Hong's (K'ang's) party are too proud and jealous of our Chinese-English scholars. They don't like to have the same rank as us; they always aspire to governing us or want us all to submit to them...It has all been a game of selfish political chess and scheming to become top dog!"

The failure of the reformers and revolutionaries to work together was based much on the social and ideological differences between Sun Yat-sen and K'ang Yu-wei. K'ang, a renowned classical scholar and minor official who had enjoyed the rare distinction of submitting memorials directly to the throne, was emotionally attached to the person of Emperor Kuang-hsü. He therefore logically looked down upon the anti-Manchu rebel Sun Yat-sen, with his Western medical education and secret society following. Sun considered himself one of "Four Brigands," while K'ang saw himself a "saint." Sun's

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[7] Ch'en Shao-pai, op. cit. 101-101b, 108b-109; Miyazaki Torazō (trans. Chung-kuo yen-chiu-she) San-shih-san-nien lo-hua meng (Tokyo, 1943) 58-65; M. B. Jansen, The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen (Cambridge, Mass. 1954) 76-77; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih (Changsha 1939) I, 73-5; Chih Kuei, op. cit. 7-8; the China Mail of 20 October, 1898, p. 3, col. 1.

[8] After K'ang left Japan for his American and European tour, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao was frequently seen in the company of the revolutionaries, and preparations were actually made for the amalgamation of the two groups, with Sun as the President of the federation and Liang Vice-President. When news of this reached K'ang, he immediately sent Liang to Hawaii to form a branch of the Pao-huang Tang. This was meant to wrench Liang away from revolutionary influences in Japan, and it was effective. See Hao Yen-p'ing, op. cit. 100-101; Feng Tzu-yu, op. cit. II, 31-5; Chih Kuei, op. cit. 8.

[9] Yang's letter of 6 June, 1899, in Tse Tsan-tai, op. cit. 14-5.

republicanism stood opposed to K'ang's constitutional monarchism, and neither was prepared to give up his political ideal.[10] K'ang's dislike of Sun was to lead to an unfortunate incident in the summer of 1900.

Meanwhile, the Chinese government under the direction of the Empress-Dowager continued to view both reformers and revolutionaries as criminals detrimental to the peace of the Empire, and was unceasing in its efforts to procure their capture and punishment. To do so, it required the cooperation of the British Government which had custody over the offenders who had fled to the Colonies of Hong Kong and Singapore. Britain's traditional policy, however, was one of protection for political refugees in her jurisdiction. This policy was adamantly adhered to by her colonial administrators, especially Sir Henry Blake (1838-1918) Governor of Hong Kong.

Blake became Governor in November, 1898, and from the first demonstrated that he had his own ideas for the running of affairs in the Colony, in a manner that he thought correct, even though it should run counter to Colonial Office policies.[11] An example of his strong-mindedness was seen when soon after he became Governor, he was involved in the difficulties

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[10] Accounts of the basic differences between the two camps can be seen in Li Chien-nung, Chung-kuo chin-pai-nien cheng-chih she (Taiwan, 1957) I, 173-4; Wu Tse, K'ang Yu-wei yü Liang Ch'i-ch'ao (Shanghai, 1948) 16, 89; Hsiao Kung-ch'üan, Chung-kuo cheng-chih ssu-hsiang shih (Shanghai, 1946) 700-2, 734-5; Lo Chia-lun, Ko-ming Wen-hsien (Taiwan, 1953-64) III, 291-2; R. Scalapino and H. Schiffrin, "Early Socialist Currents in the Chinese Revolutionary Movement: Sun-Yat-sen versus Liang Ch'i-ch'ao" in Journal of Asian Studies, XVIII, 3 (May 1959) 321-342.

[11] He won his first contest with the Colonial Office by refusing to go out to Hong Kong in the summer of 1898 because of its heat, using such persuasive reasoning that Chamberlain agreed to his plans, even to the extent of giving him half salary for six months prior to his taking up his post. Chamberlain realized, "I have no doubt the arrangement will be attacked in the House of Commons--but the circumstances are special." See Chamberlain Minutes on Blake to C.O. 20 Feb. 1898, C.O. 129/288. See also correspondence and minutes on Blake to C.O. 5 Feb. 1898, and C.O. to Blake 5 Apr. 1898, ibid.

connected with Britain's taking over of the New Territories opposite the island,[12] in the face of violent and often unreasoned opposition from the local population. In a hasty attempt to settle differences with the Canton authorities, Blake suddenly paid a visit to the Viceroy T'an Chung-lin in April, 1899, with neither authority nor sanction from the Colonial Office, who were informed only after the incident was over. Even worse, his venture did nothing to stop the disturbances then prevailing, and from his acting over the head of the British Consul-General in Canton, through whom he was supposed to communicate with the Canton government, dated his uneasy relations with B. C. G. Scott, (1846-1929). This would cause much unpleasantness in future questions with regard to the activities of the Chinese revolutionaries. Now Blake was severely censured by both the government at home and the local population for this inauspicious start of his administration.[13]

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[12] This was part of Britain's share in the general "Scramble for Concessions" of 1898. See F. O. correspondence in F.O. 17/1362-1365; Appendix F. "Extension of Hong Kong" in China Association, Annual Report, 1898-1899; C. Collins, Public Administration in Hong Kong (London, 1952) 134-6; G. B. Endacott, A History of Hong Kong (London, 1958) 260-9; the Hong Kong Hansard 4 Oct. 1899; Hong Kong Sessional Papers, 1899, 585-8.

[13] C.O. minutes on Blake's telegram of 1 Apr. 1899, C.O. 129/290 and on his despatch of 7 Apr. 1899 (confidential) ibid; see also an extract of North China Daily News, 20 Apr. 1899, enclosed in Bax-Ironside to F.O., 1 May 1899, FO 17/1374, which described the incident: "The initial mistake, and a very grave one, was made when the Governor... posted off to Canton to ask the Viceroy to afford military protection to the delimiting party. In the first place, if the Governor had any communication to make to the Viceroy, custom demands that he should make it through the Consul at Canton; it is entirely infra dig, as well as being contrary to well-founded practices, for the Governor who is the Queen's representative, to go up in a torpedo-boat to interview the Chinese Viceroy, and it must lead to complications when the matter comes to the notice of the British Minister. Then, considering the ample force of which the Governor has disposal at Hong Kong, it was an unpardonable display of weakness for him to ask for Chinese military protection..."

On the other hand, throughout the period of his term of office, Blake was on extremely good terms with the Chinese population of the Colony, and especially those factions which aspired to reformist and sometimes revolutionary ideals. Blake was known for his "genuine interest in the places with which he has been identified,"[14] and this was amply borne out in Hong Kong. In January, 1902, when he was due to go on leave, he was presented with an address from the Chinese community of the Colony signed by one thousand two hundred of the local leaders, and submitted to him by Ho Ch'i. In his speech, Ho stressed the fact that during his administration Blake had "completely won the admiration, esteem and confidence of every section of the Chinese community."[15] The climax of their respect for Blake came in March, 1903, some eighteen months before the end of his term of office, when the Chinese community, again led by Ho Ch'i, presented a petition asking for an extension of his term for another six years. The petition was not welcomed at the Colonial Office: it was found that many points of detail in the document relating to Blake's achievements in the colony were open to criticism, and at any rate it was premature to consider his extension at that juncture.[16] It was not referred to again, and Blake left the colony in November, 1904, by which time he was

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[14] London and China Express, 28 Oct. 1898, p. 98, col. 1-2

[15] China Mail, 2 Jan. 1902, p. 4, col. 6-7, also enclosed in Blake to C.O. 3 Jan. 1902, in CO 129/310. The Hong Kong Telegraph of 3 Jan. 1902 remarked that Blake had sometimes been criticised by people who thought that he gave way too much to the Chinese at the expense of the European community.

[16] Fiddian Minute on Blake to C.O., 31 Mar. 1903, CO129/316

nearly sixty-five years old.[17]

But Blake's friendship with the Chinese of Hong Kong, and especially with Ho Ch'i, who at this time was in close contact with many of the Hsing Chung Hui leaders, was to have its effect on the course of revolutionary history, and in particular on the attempted uprising in 1900. In this respect, it is also important to note Blake's close relationship with Li Hung-chang, after the latter was appointed Viceroy at Canton in December, 1899.[18] On his way to Canton, Li passed through Hong Kong, and the two administrators had a lengthy meeting on 15 January, 1900. Having agreed to do all he could to cooperate with the British government in such outstanding problems as piracy, the New Territories and the opium question, Li referred to the Governor and himself as being colleagues and associates, and said that "all things between them could be settled by cordial cooperation, and that it would never be

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[17] As a final gesture of goodwill, the Chinese community lavished expensive gifts on Blake and Lady Blake during a farewell presentation. Blake regarded the gifts as merely an exchange of courtesies between himself and his Chinese friends, and accepted them; the Colonial Office, however, thought that their presentation conflicted with Colonial Regulations, and felt that Blake should either have returned them, surrendered them to the Treasury, or asked the Secretary of State for special permission for keeping them. "In any case he is to blame for not taking this course but leaving us to hear of the matter through the press." See Stubbs Minute on Blake to C.O. 1 Feb. 1904, CO 129/322

[18] When MacDonald, who was supposedly instrumental in causing Li's dismissal from the Tsungli-yamen in 1898, telegraphed the news of the appointment, Campbell at the Foreign Office commented, "Li Hung-chang is always being sent on some mission, probably to get rid of him from Peking" Campbell minute on MacDonald tel. 20 Dec. 1899, FO 17/1381; this view is also seen in S. Spector, Li Hung-chang and the Huai Army (Seattle, 1964) 266-7; the London and China Express however, regarded it as a "belated recognition" of the fact that Li seemed to be the only man capable of handling the international and domestic problems inherent in the southern viceroyalty. See London and China Express of 29 Dec. 1899, p. 982, col. 1-2. Even the educated Cantonese of the region who were supposed to bear him no good will, were forced to agree that he was the right man in the right place; MacDonald to F.O. 16 Mar. 1900, FO 17/1411.

necessary to refer matters to the yamen or to the British Minister".[19] To this Blake replied that he "desired nothing better."[20] So a tacit agreement for independent action in the South was thus arrived at between Blake and Li, and this was to encourage both in devising schemes for rallying the revolutionaries in an unusual movement during the Boxer turmoils that were to come.

For the moment, Blake was more immediately concerned with upholding the right of the British Colony to afford shelter to political refugees. It will be remembered that after the 1898 coup, K'ang Yu-wei travelled abroad, everywhere making tactless statements invoking British aid in restoring the Emperor Kuang-hsü to power. On 28 October, 1899, he left Japan for Hong Kong again. On 6 December, the Chinese Minister in London, Lo Feng-lu, presented a Note to the Foreign Office requesting the expulsion of K'ang from Hong Kong, and protesting that the colony was fast becoming a pied-à=terre for Chinese malcontents plotting against the Dynasty. Lo also suggested that since both the United States and Japanese governments had lately refused asylum for K'ang, the British should do likewise, as they had done in the case of Sun Yat-sen.[21] On this latter point, however, the Foreign Office observed that no analogy could be drawn between the two men: "The cases are not at all the same. Sun was a plotter against the existing regime at Peking, but K'ang was the confidant

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[19] Memo of the interview in MacDonald to F.O. 6 Feb. 1900, FO 17/1411 and also Blake to C.O. 19 Jan. 1900 (confidential) CO 129/297

[20] Blake to C.O. ibid; Hamilton of the Colonial Office observed that Li's suggestion to Blake "shows how much he thinks of the yamen!" ibid

[21] Lo Feng-lu to F.O. 6 Dec. 1899, FO 17/1718

and trusted adviser of the existing government, viz. The Emperor."[22] It was also discovered that the Japanese government had in fact reversed their earlier decision, and shortly before K'ang's arrival resolved to allow him to land in that country, and even afforded him police protection.[23] Armed with this knowledge and the fact that the United States discouraged Chinese immigration in principle and not for the immigrants' political views, the British government thought that the Chinese request was "one of extreme delicacy,"[24] and which could not be complied with without substantial proof that by giving in to the Chinese government, there was no danger of infringing the British tradition of granting asylum and protection to political refugees. It was decided to solicit the views of Sir Henry Blake first.[25] In point of fact, the Colonial Office was uncertain whether K'ang was now fomenting rebellion against the Dynasty, as the Chinese Note claimed, or merely working for constitutional reforms.[26]

Blake telegraphed back that he objected to the banishment of K'ang from the Colony, since he had lived "a most retired life," and had done nothing to justify any action against him.[27] Thus enlightened, the Colonial

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[22] Campbell Minutes on above, ibid

[23] Satow to F.O., 31 Dec. 1899, enclosed in F.O. to C.O., 12 Dec. 1899, CO 129/295; Lo Jung-pang, op. cit. 182.

[24] F.O. to MacDonald, 13 Dec. 1899, FO 17/1371

[25] ibid; and C.O. tel. to Blake, 16 Dec. 1899, in FO 17/1718.

[26] See Fiddian's Note to Lucas, in F.O. to C.O. 15 Dec. 1899 (immediate) in CO 129/295

[27] Blake tel. C.O. 17 Dec. CO 129/294

Office was satisfied that the Chinese demand was "excessive,"[28] and that the Banishment Ordinance is "intended for us to get rid of undesirable and dangerous aliens, not to hand over inoffensive political refugees to foreign governments. K'ang would certainly be executed if he ever got into the clutches of the Empress-Dowager."[29] The Foreign Office was informed of this line of reasoning, and the Chinese Minister was duly advised.[30]

The matter would have ended there, had it not been for an impatient move by the Empress-Dowager in her pursuit of K'ang Yu-wei. On the 20th December, the day before Lo Feng-lu received a negative answer to his request, a decree was issued commanding the capture of K'ang and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, offering rewards for their arrest or assassination.[31] Sir Claude MacDonald had learned from a confidential source in Peking that the Empress-Dowager was much incensed at the refuge given to the reformers by the British government, and that Li Hung-chang's appointment to Canton could be interpreted as affording him an opportunity of arresting them.[32] When news of this decree reached Blake, he was most irritated, and desired to protest strongly against this incentive

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[28] Fiddian Minutes on above, ibid

[29] H. F. W. Minutes on above, ibid

[30] C.O. to F.O. 21 Dec. 1899, FO 17/1718

[31] The decree is found in WHPF II, 115-6, and translated in MacDonald to F.O. 22 Dec. 1899 (Confidential) FO 17/1718

[32] MacDonald to F.O. 22 Dec. ibid. Sir Henry Blake also reported that he had received information that a proposal was made to Li while the latter was in Hong Kong by some Chinese officials who offered to procure the assassination of K'ang in accordance with this decree, and that Li had apparently ordered them not to attempt to interfere with K'ang while enjoying British protection. See Blake to C.O. 19 Jan. 1900 (confidential) CO 129/297; also the London and China Express of 9 Mar. 1900, p. 185 col. 2

to assassinate in a British colony:[33]

> "It entails serious expense or abandonment of our duty to insure safety of law-abiding visitors and safety of person. It may be more than coincidence that edict synchronises with Li Hung Chang's appointment to be Viceroy of Canton. I shall take every means to secure K'ang's safety."

Chamberlain agreed with Blake, and it now fell upon the Foreign Office to deliver the necessary protest to the Chinese government. At first Blake's ire seemed to have pervaded the Foreign Office, and Francis Bertie began drafting a telegram to MacDonald, "Inform Chinese government that if the offer results in assassination or kidnapping of that individual they will be held responsible by HMG. You should do your best to obtain withdrawal of the offer."[34] Lord Salisbury, however, with his customary caution, intervened: "It hardly seems our business," he declared.[35] This restraining influence had its effect, and Bertie on reflection decided that "It is hard on the Chinese government that we should allow Hong Kong to be made by a Chinese so-called rebel the basis for intrigues against the Peking Government... It is perhaps better to please the Chinese Government in this case than Sir Henry Blake."[36]

It was now necessary to convince the Colonial authorities of this stand, and the Foreign Office resorted to a lengthy explanation that the proximity of Hong Kong to the Chinese mainland gave great facilities for the preparation in Hong Kong of insurrectionary movements in China, and that K'ang's presence would

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[33] Blake tel. to C.O. 25 Dec. 1899, CO 129/295.

[34] Bertie Minutes, 26 Dec., on C.O. to F.O. 26 Dec. 1899 (pressing) FO,17/1718. CO 129/295.

[35] Salisbury Minutes on above, ibid.

[36] Bertie Memo, ibid.

undoubtedly be looked upon by the Tsungli-yamen as a serious grievance and as an unfriendly act on the part of Great Britain. Moreover, it was argued that if Her Majesty's Government permitted K'ang to stay in Hong Kong, the agents of some Foreign Powers at Peking would not lose the opportunity of impressing upon the Chinese Government that Britain was encouraging a seditious movement. The Foreign Office, therefore, suggested that K'ang should be induced to depart for Singapore or elsewhere, where his personal safety could be more easily secured.[37] The fact that the Foreign Office proposed his removal to Singapore, which was still British territory, suggested that the Government was not averse to harbouring K'ang Yu-wei in principle, as long as he was far enough removed from Chinese territory to avoid risks of unpleasant incidents.

Yet the Colonial Office was not wholly satisfied with this line of reasoning. They were willing to persuade K'ang to move from Hong Kong, but insisted on the Foreign Office making a protest against the decree of 20 December, which was tantamount to inciting murder in a British colony.[38] Salisbury having made it clear, however, that he was unwilling to interfere with the issue of decrees by the Chinese Government, the Foreign Office was disinclined to listen to the frequent reminders from the Colonial Office about this protest.[39]

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[37] F.O. to C.O. 29 Dec. 1899 (immediate and confidential) CO 129/295.

[38] C.O. to F.O. 2 Jan. 1900, FO 17/1718: this view was particularly strongly held by C. P. Lucas and Johnson, though Chamberlain personally felt that the Chinese government "had good reason to object to our harbouring almost in their territory a conspirator whom they think dangerous and we ought to put some pressure on K'ang to go." ibid.

[39] C.O. to F.O. 11 Jan. 1900 (confidential) FO 17/1718, and again C.O. to F.O. 29 Jan. 1900 (confidential) ibid. The C.O. feeling was "they seem to want to shelve the matter." Stubbs minutes, ibid.

By this time, K'ang was ready to leave Hong Kong for Singapore,[40] where he was expected on 31 January, 1900. The Acting Governor, Sir Frank Swettenham (1850-1946) telegraphed for instructions.[41] Here the lack of a real guiding hand as to policy from the Foreign Office was evident. Whereas K'ang was encouraged to leave for Singapore while he was in Hong Kong, now that he was due at Singapore, the Foreign Office desired him to move on to somewhere else again, this time Ceylon being suggested.[42] The British Government could not refuse him asylum in principle, yet in practice he and the movement he represented did not seem important enough to warrant a quarrel with the Chinese Government, an inevitable consequence if the British continued to shelter him. This was the dilemma apparent to the Foreign Office, though the Colonial authorities, following the lead of their men on the spot, failed to appreciate it. Once again they urged the Foreign Office to protest against the decree.[43] Finally, wearied of the constant reminders, Salisbury gave instructions for a telegram to MacDonald to protest against the practice complained of, "but without any threat."[44] On the other hand, neither was the Chinese Government satisfied to hear that K'ang had left Hong Kong only to

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[40] Blake tel. C.O. 10 Jan. 1900, CO 129/297.

[41] Swettenham tel. C.O. 28 Jan. 1900, FO 17/1718. Swettenham was then Resident-General of the Federated Malay States, and was appointed Governor of the Straits Settlements in 1901. He was known for his fluency in the Malay language and his efforts in the material development of the Federation. See his autobiography, Footprints in Malaya (London, 1942), and a history, British Malaya (London, 1906).

[42] F.O. to C.O., 30 Jan. 1900, FO 17/1718.

[43] C.O. to F.O. (pressing) 1 Feb. 1900, ibid.

[44] See F.O. tel. MacDonald, 5 Feb. 1900, ibid, which was much corrected by Salisbury himself before it went out.

reside in yet another British colony, and Lo Feng-lu again pressed for his expulsion.[45] Salisbury, somewhat softened perhaps by the constant flow of despatches from the Colonial Office, now indicated that K'ang was not to be interfered with, "unless he was guilty of illegal acts."[46]

K'ang Yu-wei was thus given similar protection by the Singapore government as he had enjoyed in Hong Kong, with one difference: whereas Blake was only too willing to continue affording him asylum for as long as K'ang wanted, Swettenham did not share his sympathies for the reformer. He soon devised a plan to get rid of K'ang secretly from the colony.[47] It was only a timely telegram from the Colonial Office that no further pressure should be put on K'ang to leave,[48] which put a stop to Swettenham's plans.

Up to this time, British policy, such as it was, had been largely directed by the stipulations of the Colonial Office. There had been no real guidance from an experienced observer of the Chinese situation. Now Sir Claude MacDonald in Peking contributed his views, and indicated how far Britain should go in exerting itself on behalf of K'ang Yu-wei. MacDonald reported that on 14 February, 1900, another decree had appeared for the capture of K'ang, dead or alive. The reward offered amounted to one hundred thousand

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[45] Lo Feng-lu to F.O., 7 Feb. 1900, ibid.

[46] Salisbury Minutes on above, ibid.

[47] His plan was to smuggle K'ang on board his ship when he was going on a short journey to Penang, passing him off as his servant; and then leaving the Reformer, with the Viceroy's consent, at the Andaman Settlement, where no person was allowed to land without leave. He thought that K'ang would then be perfectly safe and it was cheaper to give him an allowance than keeping sixteen men guarding him at a cost of $200 a month. See Swettenham to C.O. 24 Feb. 1900 (private) CO 273/256. The Andaman Islands, part of the republic of India, was then used by the Indian Government as a convict colony. Transportation only ceased in 1921.

[48] C.O. tel. Swettenham, 23 Feb. 1900, ibid.

taels, nearly £15,000.[49] He therefore pointed out in plain language: "I may urge till all's blue and the Chinese government will certainly not rescind an Imperial decree,"[50] and now it was a question of two decrees. "With matters such as they are in South Africa, I don't suppose HMG want another row on their hands all on account of a visionary Chinaman, who according to the laws of China is a double distilled traitor..."[51] In a second despatch he gave an account of an interview with Li Hung-chang, who informed him that as long as the Empress Dowager remained in power, no official in the government would dare suggest that an Imperial decree be withdrawn. MacDonald thus concluded that "In my opinion nothing short of a concentration of the Fleet, followed by actively hostile measures would suffice to obtain considerations for a request that the offer of reward should be withdrawn."[52]

The Foreign Office was now fully cognisant of the implications of the situation. It was clear that Britain wanted no war with China over the protection of K'ang Yu-wei, and it was felt that "MacDonald had saved us from a difficult impasse into which the insistence of the Colonial Office would have led us."[53] Previous instructions to MacDonald demanding the withdrawal of the decrees were suspended,[54] and K'ang was to be allowed to remain in Singapore if he wished, but no further pressure need be put on him to leave if he was

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[49] The decree is found in WHPF II, 117; also see the Times of 3 Mar., 1900, p. 8 col. 1; Lo Jung-pang, op. cit. 261.

[50] MacDonald to F.O. (private) 15 Feb. 1900, FO 17/1718.

[51] ibid. The reference to South Africa was of course to the Boer War then raging.

[52] MacDonald to F.O. 16 Feb. 1900 (confidential) ibid.

[53] Campbell Minutes on above, ibid.

[54] F.O. tel. MacDonald, 22 Feb. 1900, ibid.

unwilling.[55] It is interesting to note the confidence with which the Foreign Office now handled the reminders from the Colonial Office in regard to this question. On 10 March, Swettenham telegraphed that the Chinese authorities had offered new rewards for the heads of K'ang and Liang,[56] and the Colonial Office again suggested that MacDonald should warn the Chinese government of the gravely culpable character of their action, and that serious consequences might ensue if the proclamations led to the assassination of these refugees on British soil.[57] Campbell immediately decided, "I cannot think that any useful result is likely to follow from our giving a warning in the sense suggested, but for the satisfaction of the Colonial Office."[58] This was echoed by Bertie, "It does not seem to be of much use to fix the responsibility on the Chinese Government unless we are prepared to punish them and that contingency had better be avoided for the present."[59] Lord Salisbury himself drafted the reply to the Colonial Office: "I am still averse to uttering a threat to which effect cannot be given, at least, at present."[60]

The whole episode of British colonial policy and K'ang Yu-wei served to emphasize the confusion among British policy-makers as to the political intentions of the reformer after the 1898 fiasco. There were rumours prevalent that he was working up a rebellion against the Manchu rulers,[61] and that he had

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[55] F.O. to C.O. 22 Feb. 1900, (secret and immediate) ibid.

[56] Swettenham tel. C.O. 10 Mar. 1900, CO. 273/256.

[57] C.O. to F.O. 13 Mar. 1900, (secret and immediate) ibid.

[58] Campbell minutes on above, ibid.

[59] Bertie Minutes, ibid.

[60] F.O. to C.O. 15 Mar. 1900, (immediate and confidential) ibid.

[61] See Swettenham tel. C.O. 29 Mar. 1900, FO 17/1718, and despatch of 29 March 1900 (secret) ibid.

been abducted by Chinese spies and taken to Canton.[62] K'ang himself did not help matters by giving interviews to the press freely and openly,[63] thus frustrating both Blake's and Swettenham's attempts to protect him from possible assassins. The confusion was to be intensified when between July and October of 1900, both reformers and revolutionaries began preparations for insurrections, and there was again talk of the two camps joining forces.

One of the factors which provoked the militant faction among the reformers to decide on an insurrection was the condition of things in Peking, especially the treatment of the Emperor Kuang-hsü by the Empress-Dowager and her advisers. MacDonald had early heard that the imperial succession was soon to be decided on;[64] the decree appointing an Heir to the throne really appeared on 25 January,1900.[65] The immediate reaction to this move from foreign observers was that the deposition of the Emperor was now a certainty, and there was much condemnation for the instigators of such a step.[66] The English press gave

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[62] See the Times, 30 Mar. 1900, p. 5, col. 1, and Hansard LXXXI, 797 and 901 Blake tel. CO 1 Apr. 1900, CO 129/298.

[63] In the Times, 10 Feb. 1900, p. 8 col. 1, and 23 June 1900, p. 13, col. 6; London and China Express, 16 Mar. 1900, p. 207-8; and the Times of 10 Dec. 1900, p. 6 col 1.

[64] Secret clause in his tel. to F.O. 14 Jan. 1900, FO 17/1718.

[65] MacDonald tel. F.O. 25 Jan. 1900, FO 17/1418 and Lo Feng-lu to F.O. 2 Apr. 1900, FO 17/1435 transmitting the text of the decree. P'u-chün, son of Prince Tuan (Tsai-i) was made heir apparent and the legitimate successor of the T'ung-shih emperor instead of Kuang-hsü. Prince Tuan was one of the Empress-Dowager's favourites at Court.

[66] See MacDonald to F.O. 31 Jan. 1900, FO 17/1411. The London and China Express, 2 Feb. 1900, p. 89-90 sums up the reactions of the various European Powers; the North China Daily News had also published a telegram, repeated in the London and China Express of 9 Mar. 1900, which asserted that some Wuchang officials had also petitioned against the edict, which move was denied by the Viceroy Chang Chih-tung. See MacDonald to F.O. 28 Apr. 1900, FO 17/1412.

wide support and publicity to a petition sent to Peking by one thousand two hundred representatives of the Shanghai Chinese merchants and gentry asking for the revocation of the decree, and the incident gained importance when the leader of the petition, Cheng Lien-shan, was arrested at Macao in February at the instance of the Chinese government on trumped-up charges of embezzling government funds.[67] From the Chinese communities in Singapore and Washington came also petitions requesting the British Minister at Peking to protect the Emperor's life.[68] Even in the House of Commons questions were asked of the government as to why it had not seen fit to interfere in China and inaugurate an era of reform by strengthening the Emperor Kuang-hsü in his position.[69] The China Association too, urged that Britain should exert herself to stop the continual persecution of the reform party, whose "offence appears to consist in the adoption of progressive views which Foreigners have long been trying to instil into their minds."[70] The Shanghai Branch of the Association had more specific causes for complaint, including the issue of barbarous edicts meant for the pursuit of men with progressive ideas in the Foreign Settlement, and the persistent lack of faith demonstrated by the Chinese government regarding their promises of enlightened reforms. There was a general conviction that

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[67] The Times 27 Jan. 1900, p. 7 col. 6, and 28 Feb. 1900, p.5 col. 6; London and China Express 9 Mar. 1900, 184-5; See also the China Association Annual Report, 1900-1901, and R. Gundry (Hon. Secretary) to Bertie, 12 Apr. 1900 (private) in FO 17/1438, in which he urged the British Government to intervene by approaching the Portuguese Government to prevent Cheng's extradition.

[68] C.O. to F.O. 2 Feb. 1900, FO 17/1437 and Chinese Merchants in Seattle, Washington, to H. M. Edward VII, 24 Jan. 1901, in FO 17/1500.

[69] Hansard LXXXI, 30 Mar. 1900, p. 863, 867-70, 886-7.

[70] China Association to F.O., 10 May 1900, FO 17/1439, and Appendix A of Annual Report, 1900-1901.

the reform movement, as they interpreted it, was already too deep-seated to be overcome by repressive measures against individuals.[71] Amidst such an atmosphere of protests all round, it seemed that Sir Claude MacDonald was the only person who viewed the situation in its proper perspective, and attached to it no other interpretation than it deserved. He blamed the Shanghai foreign press for fostering erroneous impressions of the consequences of the edict, and reassured the British government at home that in Peking the whole affair was carried through with the greatest ease and order.[72]

Nevertheless, an opportunity was presented to K'ang and the reformers: the Emperor's position appeared threatened and public opinion in the Yangtze seemed favourable. The leader in the movement for an insurrection was T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang, who had been introduced to Sun Yat-sen and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao during the negotiations for cooperation in 1895. T'ang was also a friend of the Hunanese Ko-lao secret society chief P'i Yung-nien, who probably did much to encourage him in the advantages of working through active rebellions.[73] K'ang Yu-wei meanwhile also approved of T'ang's plans, despite his open condemnation of revolutionary tactics. One of his purposes in visiting Singapore in 1900 had been to enlist financial assistance for T'ang from the overseas

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[71] The Shanghai Committee to MacDonald, 26 Mar. 1900, enclosed in Gundry to Campbell 3 May 1900 (private) FO 17/1439.

[72] MacDonald to F.O. 15 Feb. 1900, FO 17/1411.

[73] For accounts of T'ang, see "T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang teng-jen chuan-chi" in WHPF IV, 89-90; Hao Yen-p'ing, op. cit. 99, 106; Tse Tsan tai, op. cit. 20; Chang Nan-hsien, Hu-peh ko-ming chih-chih lu (Chungking 1945) 22-3. Accounts of P'i are given in M. B. Jansen op. cit. 65; Ku Yen-shih, Chung-kuo mi-mi she-hui shih (Shanghai 1927) 76-8; Feng Tzu-yu, op. cit. I, 109; Miyazaki Torazō, op. cit. 73-5.

Chinese.[74] Perhaps Yang Ch'ü-yün had correctly observed in June 1899 that K'ang's party refused to work with the revolutionaries only because of rivalry for leadership. T'ang's attempt now proved that the reformers were not averse to employing revolutionary means when it seemed expedient.

T'ang proposed to raise the rebellion in Hankow, and the initial plans were made in 1899 in Japan. Then in Shanghai early in 1900 he organised the Tzu-li Hui (Independent Society) as headquarters for his movement.[75] When the furore over the appointment of an Heir to the throne swept Shanghai, a body of reformers approached the Acting British Consul-General at Shanghai, Pelham Warren (1845-1923) to receive a deputation from them. Warren refused, and they subsequently sent in a written communication, stating that unless the Emperor was restored to the throne, they were prepared to stir up the secret societies throughout the country with the object of compelling the Foreign Powers to interfere. This immediately gave Warren the impression that the reformers were going to raise an insurrection together with Sun Yat-sen and the Yangtze secret societies.[76] A few days later, Timothy Richard saw Warren and showed him a letter he had received, supposedly from a "Reform Society"

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[74] Lo Jung-pang, op. cit. 184-6; M. E. Tsur, "K'ang Yu-wei" in Hankow Club Collected Papers (University of Hong Kong) XXXIX, 5; Hao Yen-p'ing, op. cit. 106-7; Swettenham however, believed that T'ang did not have the authority or sympathy of K'ang Yu-wei in his movement, and that K'ang regarded him as being actuated by personal motives. Swettenham was probably misinformed: Swettenham to C.O. 23 Jan. 1901, enclosed in C.O. to F.O. (secret) 25 Feb. 1901, FO 17/1718.

[75] The Society is described in "K'ang Yu-wei wei-k'an k'ao" in WHPF I, 425-432; Chang Nan-hsien, op. cit. 19-21; E. J. Smythe, "The Tzu-li Hui, some Chinese and their rebellions" in Harvard University, Papers on China XII, 51-68; Chang Huang-ch'i, "Chi Tzu-li Hui" in HHKM I, 253-7; Liu K'un-i, Liu K'un-i i-chi (Peking 1959) V, 2269, 2271-2.

[76] Warren to F.O. 30 Aug. 1900, FO 17/1425, and Warren to MacDonald 29 Jan, enclosed in MacDonald to F.O. 15 Feb. 1900, FO 17/1411.

(probably the Tzu-li Hui) again threatening rebellion if Great Britain did not interfere. Warren did not attach much importance to the threats, but concluded that "if the party does set to work to stir up rebellion in the provinces there is no doubt the members of the disaffected and of the secret societies will be quite ready to join in."[77]

Warren's fears that a movement of some extent was being hatched were further substantiated when in July he was presented with an official Manifesto sent by the "Chinese National Association,"[78] signed by its leaders Jung Hung and Yen Fu.[79] The Manifesto urged that the Powers should interfere to depose the Empress-Dowager and reinstate the Emperor Kuang-hsü, that the new government of China should then be a constitutional Empire based on the British Constitution, and that a host of judicial, military and political reforms would be promulgated. In a personal telegram to the Acting Consul-General, Jung and Yen also suggested that Britain should take the lead in

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[77] Warren to MacDonald, 29 Jan. 1900, ibid.

[78] This was the English name for the Shanghai branch of the Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui after 1898. It is sometimes called the "Deliberative Association of China," see E. H. Worthy, "Yung Wing in America" in Pacific Historical Review, XXXIV, 3 (Aug. 1965) 284.

[79] Jung Hung (Yung Wing) was best-known as the pioneer of the Educational Mission to the United States in 1872. He played a minor role during the 1898 Reform Movement, and fled to Shanghai after the coup, where he promoted the Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui in the International Settlement. At this time, he was known to the British authorities as a prominent negotiator for the Tien-tsin Chinkiang railway Concession, "a very well informed, but quite unpractical man, full of visionary ideas." See Warren to F.O. 20 Aug. 1900, (confidential) FO 17/1445; E. H. Worthy, op. cit. 284; Shu Hsin-ch'eng, Chin-tai Chung-kuo liu-hsüeh shih (Shanghai, 1927) 2-7; Lo Hsing-lin, The Role of Hong Kong in the Cultural Exchange between East and West (Tokyo 1963), 121-2.
Yen Fu was prominent during the 1898 Reform Movement. See Chapter III.

negotiating for reforms with the Chinese government,[80] presumably in connection with the Boxer settlements. But there is reason to believe that the Tzu-li Hui and the "Chinese National Association" were acting independently of each other, though both groups campaigned for British support for their activities at about the same time. There was no talk of rebellion from the "National Association" at this juncture; yet Jung Hung was to play an important role in the 1903 attempt at insurrection engineered by some revolutionaries in Hong Kong. This fluidity of loyalties contributed to the difficulties confronting the British government when dealing with the events of 1900-3.

In the meantime, the Tzu-li Hui began its operations. On 9 August, 1900, an advance battalion of rebels sought to rise in Ta-t'ung, in Wuhu, but was quickly suppressed by the Chinese authorities, which resulted in numerous arrests and executions. This early fiasco, combined with the lack of funds, faulty organization and the leakage of information, led to the complete wash-out of the Hankow attempt by the end of the month. When the rebels, many of whom were Ko-lao Hui members, were arrested at Ta-t'ung, incriminating evidence was found on their persons, including firearms, flags, the Society membership lists and proclamations written in both Chinese and English.[81] This supplied the Yangtze Viceroys Chang Chih-tung and Liu Kun-i with valuable

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[80] Both documents are enclosed in Warren to F.O. 20 Aug. 1900 (confidential) FO 17/1445.

[81] See the Proclamation in "K'ang Yu-wei wei-k'an k'ao" in WHPF I, 425-32, and the English version in Fraser to Warren of 23 Aug. 1900, enclosed in Warren to F.O. 30 Aug.1900, FO 17/1425. The North China Herald of 29 Aug. 1900, p. 438, col. 2-5, described the event as "reformers... playing at rebellion in an amateur sort of way, and had never realized what it all meant...The whole affair is pitiable in the extreme..."

intelligence. On the evening of 21 August, the taotai at Shanghai on the Viceroy's instructions requested Warren to back two warrants for the arrest of some men in the Settlement. Warren complied, and as a result a raid was made on the headquarters of the Tzu-li Hui. Forty men were arrested, and more documents and firearms were found in the houses searched. Sixteen of the leaders were later beheaded, including T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang.[82]

The successful frustration of the Hankow uprising was thus due mainly to the cooperation of the British authorities. At first Warren seemed fairly sympathetic towards the reform movement in Shanghai. When he discovered that the "Chinese National Association" included among its membership a number of prominent local officials and Hanlins, he felt that "the desire for better government, and the conviction that this can only come by copying Western methods, is not wholly undeserving of recognition or sympathy."[83] However, just at this time, Sir Henry Blake telegraphed from Hong Kong a suggestion that "... it would be prudent to convey to Kang and Sun an assurance that if they abstain from active operation HMG will, in the negotiations for the settlement of the present crisis, consider and press for any fair and reasonable reforms that the people may demand,"[84] to which the Foreign Office replied in haste that he was not to give promises of the kind. Thus it was understandable

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[82] Accounts of the rising are seen in the Times 25 Aug. 1900, p. 3 col. 2; Chang Nan-hsien, op. cit. 19-21; Warren tel. F.O. 28 Aug. 1900 FO 17/1425; Fraser to Warren 23 Aug. 1900, in Warren to F.O. 30 Aug. 1900, ibid; Chang Huang-ch'i, op. cit. in HHKM I, 253-98; Li Hung-chang, Li Wen-chung Kung ch'üan-chi (1908) "Tien Kao" chüan 25, p. 49b; Ku Kung Tang-an kuan, "T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang Han-kow ch'i-i Ch'ing-fang tang-an" in HHKM I, 258-279; the China Mail of 24 Oct. 1900, p. 3 col. 1-2; Lo Jung-pang, op. cit. 186-8.

[83] Warren to F.O. 20 Aug. 1900 (confidential) FO 17/1445.

[84] Blake tel. C.O. 18 Aug. 1899, CO 129/300.

that Warren suddenly received instructions that Chinese agitators should not receive asylum in British Consulates in the Yangtze;[85] the authorities at home probably wanted to avert his becoming too sympathetic too. This was especially true when the Consul at Nanking seemed to give some credit to a rumour that the reformers enjoyed Britain's support.[86] By helping to suppress the movement, Warren thus acted on the conviction that even supposing the movement was really one of "reform," and that it had no connection with the Boxer outrages, "The overthrow of the constituted authority would let loose upon us all the disorderly rabble of the three cities; and the present authorities who have hitherto striven to maintain order here, are to be preferred to the self-constituted government of high sounding aims but of doubtful experience and ability."[87] Such a policy won for him the gratitude of the Chinese authorities of the Yangtze,[88] but Warren was criticised by the pro-reform English press for putting Chang Chih-tung "on the scent of this shadowy conspiracy" and indirectly leading to the "reign of terror" which followed, as the Viceroy sought to capture all men involved in the attempt.[89]

One interesting aspect which came to light during the events was the revelation to the authorities, both Chinese and British, that the Hankow rising was perpetrated with the help of a considerable number of Japanese in China, who helped the rebels to smuggle arms and ammunition into the Yangtze.

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[85] F.O. tel. Warren, 29 Aug. 1900, FO 17/1425.

[86] Sundiers tel. Warren (very secret) in Warren tel. F.O. 29 Aug. 1900, ibid.

[87] Warren to F.O. 30 Aug. 1900, FO 17/1425.

[88] Reported by Fraser, in Fraser to Warren, 23 Aug. 1900, ibid.

[89] North China Herald 29 Aug. 1900, p. 427 and p. 435-6. The Times of 10 Sept. 1900, p. 3 col. 5, however, felt that the Viceroy's measures were not unnecessarily severe.

It was found that the steamer "Yayeyama" left suddenly a few days before the rising, that the Japanese Consul in Shanghai was loath to deal severely with a Japanese arrested in the raid on 21 August, and that the names of Japanese supporters were found among the captured lists of rebels. The Chinese authorities accused the Japanese government of complicity in the plot, and Warren was asked to approach the Japanese Consul about it.[90] The Japanese government denied all knowledge of the conspiracy,[91] but in an interview which the Acting British Minister in Tokyo had with Count Aoki, the Foreign Minister, the latter admitted that it was a difficult matter keeping watch over all the Japanese in China.[92] In actual fact, though the number of Japanese active in the revolutionary movement in China was not unduly large, Japan was becoming the most important training ground for the progressive ideas with which a formidable proportion of the young Chinese reformers and revolutionaries were armed.[93]

In its effects, the Hankow rising was to act to the advantage of the Hsing Chung Hui in their preparations for insurrection in the South. P'i Yung-nien and his secret society following catered to both camps, and the Japanese sympathisers also helped the revolutionaries in obtaining arms from abroad, so that both the Chinese and British authorities in these areas were

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[90] Sundiers tel. Warren (very secret) in Warren tel. F.O. 19 Aug. 1900, FO 17/1425; Fraser to Warren, 24 Aug. 1900, (confidential) ibid. See also North China Herald of 29 Aug. 1900, p. 436, and the Times of 10 Sept. 1900, p. 3 col. 5.

[91] Campbell Minutes on Fraser to Warren, 24 Aug. 1900, FO 17/1425.

[92] Whitehead to F.O., 8 Sept. 1900 (confidential) in C.O. to F.O. 26 Nov. 1900, CO 129/302.

[93] See Chapter V.

often misled as to the activities of the reformers and the revolutionaries. There was a great deal of uncertainty regarding the movements of Sun Yat-sen, and K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, and even Sir Henry Blake was led to believe that K'ang was soon to begin a rising again in Waichow.[94]

There was no mistaking the fact, however, that both K'ang and Liang had again fled to the safety of Hong Kong just before the Hankow disaster, and the Chinese government once more sought to effect their arrest. The Chinese Minister called at the Foreign Office and delivered a Note from Li Hung-chang, in which Li accused the two reformers of calling themselves "National Protectors" but who in reality were rebelling against the government for their own evil purposes. He supplied a list of seven names as being the leaders in Hong Kong (including the name of Jung Hung) and urged that the governments of Hong Kong and Singapore should be instructed to arrest them.[95] The Foreign Office would not promise to comply with his request without proof of these men having broken the laws of the Colonies, but suggested that the Colonial authorities should be told to prevent the fomenting of insurrections in British Colonies.[96] This served to satisfy the Chinese government for a time, but the matter was revived in January, 1901, with another Note delivered to the Foreign Office, this time containing a longer list of K'ang and Liang's accomplices whom the Chinese government wished to apprehend.[97] The Colonial

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[94] Blake tel. C.O. 3 Sept. 1900, CO 129/300. See also a "Reform Document" he received, enclosed in Blake to C.O. 24 Sept. 1900, in CO 129/301.

[95] Li Hung-chang to Lo Feng-lu, 6 Sept. 1900, in Lo to F.O. 7 Sept. 1900, FO 17/1446.

[96] F.O. to C.O. 10 Sept. 1900, CO 129/302.

[97] Lo Feng-lu to F.O., 12 Jan. 1901, FO 17/1718.

governors were accordingly asked for reports on the situation,[98] and their replies illustrated that even months after the events of 1900, the British authorities were yet uninformed as to the real instigators behind the Hankow incidents. Sir Henry Blake refused to believe that Jung Hung or P'i Yung-nien (both their names were on the second list) were involved in agitations against the Chinese government, himself being a good friend of Jung's. He did concede however, that "the whole Chinese population above the coolie class are, so far as I can learn, in sympathy with the reformers."[99] He was extremely annoyed at the Chinese requests for the extradition of men who, "contrasting the insecurity of person and property in China with the security enjoyed in this Colony, most heartily desired to see the Chinese system changed."[100] By this time, of course, certain events had transpired which would justify Blake's attitude to a large extent.

Sir Frank Swettenham, meanwhile, erroneously asserted that the Hankow attempt had nothing to do with K'ang or Liang, but should rather be attributed to Sun Yat-sen and the secret societies. He believed that Sun raised the insurrection when he failed to gain K'ang's cooperation for an amalgamated movement.[101] On receipt of these reports, the Foreign Office then informed Lo Feng-lu that there was no agitation in progress in both Colonies

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[98] C.O. tels. to Blake and Swettenham, 21 Jan. 1901, CO 129/308.

[99] Blake tel. C.O. 23 Jan. 1901, CO 129/304.

[100] Blake to C.O. 12 Mar. 1901, (confidential) ibid.

[101] Swettenham to C.O., 23 Jan. 1901 (secret) in CO 273/367.

at the moment.[102] How wrong the British government was would soon be seen.

It was just at this time that the Hsing Chung Hui revolutionaries were actively preparing for their insurrection in South China. As in 1895, they chose Hong Kong as their operational headquarters, and by doing so, found themselves drawn into the unusual situation, albeit for a brief period only, of being courted both by Li Hung-chang and Sir Henry Blake to participate in a separatist movement in the South. Here the close relations earlier established between Li and Blake undoubtedly came into play.

By the end of June, 1900, when the Boxer rebellion in the North culminated in the siege of the foreign Legations in Peking, the Court decided to recall Li Hung-chang to handle the tricky international situation.[103] This was viewed with some alarm by the British government, especially its representatives in Hong Kong and Canton, who felt that Li's presence was the only means of preventing the Boxer troubles from spreading Southwards. The Officer Administering the Government in Hong Kong, Major-General Gascoigne, believed that Li could hardly accomplish anything in Peking, whereas his authority in Canton was of the utmost importance in maintaining the peace of South China, and he suggested that Li should be made to remain in the South.[104] His suggestion was carried a step further when Li asked for a safe passage through Hong Kong waters for his body-guard when they had to tranship at the

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[102] F.O. to Lo Feng-lu, 1 Feb. 1901. The Foreign Office was prevented from supplying Lo with all the information in the two despatches by an injunction from the Colonial Office that they were not to "give away" the refugees. See Lucas Minute on Swettenham's of 23 Jan. 1901, in CO 273/267, and C.O. to F.O. 25 Feb. 1901, (secret) in FO 17/1718.

[103] Li Hung-chang, op. cit. "Tien Kao", chüan 22, p. 26b, chüan 23, p. 53b.

[104] Gascoigne tel. C.O. 20 June, 1900, CO 129/299.

Colony, on their way to Shanghai. Gascoigne observed,[105]

> "I believe still that it is desirable to induce him to remain at Canton. By his asking it may be that he wishes to be refused; but refusal might make an enemy of a man whom I consider friendly."

It was obvious that Britain could not force Li to remain if he was determined to go, but the Foreign Office decided that the Consul-General at Canton should do his utmost, confidentially, to "recommend" to Li that he remain at his post, and to say that Her Majesty's ships would be ready to afford him any support in their power.[106] Scott on his part had already initiated attempts to persuade Li not to go.[107] At the same time, Lord Salisbury also spoke to Lo Feng-lu, in guarded language, that though Li must be the best judge of the situation, Her Majesty's Government would be "sorry if his life should be in danger" by his going North.[108]

At this juncture Li himself suddenly decided to postpone going North, pending further orders from Peking.[109] Li was probably awaiting further development of the situation, since he had confided to Scott that his mission to Peking would have been absolutely futile unless the Chinese government were prepared beforehand to follow his advice.[110] It was during this short

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[105] Gasgoigne tel. 21 June, 1900, ibid.

[106] F.O. tel. Scott, 22 June, 1900, FO 17/1422.

[107] Scott tel. F.O. 24 June, 1900, ibid and Scott to F.O. 5 July, 1900, ibid, reporting his two interviews with Li on 23 June and 3 July.

[108] F.O. to MacDonald, 22 June, 1900, FO 17/1410, and F.O. tel. Scott, 22 June, 1900, FO 17/1422.

[109] Gascoigne tel. C.O., 27 June 1900, CO 129/199, and Scott tel. F.O. 25 June, 1900, FO 17/1422.

[110] Scott tel. F.O. 24 June, 1900, ibid.

interim period that Li Hung-chang devised an unusual scheme in which he sought the cooperation of the Chinese reformers and revolutionaries. The plan was not carried to its logical conclusion before Li changed his mind again, but it was sufficient to suggest that at a time when his own future and that of the Chinese Court seemed so much in the balance, Li was tempted to use the revolutionaries in a bid for personal power should the worst happen in Peking. It can also be seen that he was encouraged by the prospects of such a plan because of his friendship with Sir Henry Blake, who in turn was known to have some influence among the Hong Kong revolutionaries.[111]

Li therefore communicated with Sun Yat-sen, who was then in Japan, inviting him to a meeting in Canton when they would arrange to raise a joint force to march on Peking. They would fight the Boxers and remove the Emperor and Empress-Dowager from the reactionary party. If the Emperor and Empress-Dowager were dead by then, Li was prepared to establish the two Kwang as a separate principality with the assistance of Sun and the revolutionaries. Li professed to be willing to adopt a programme of moderate reform, and if invited, to keep order as temporary head of the Chinese government until the Powers would agree to a new sovereign.[112] At the same time, Li made it possible for Sir Henry Blake to have advance knowledge of his plans by offering the post of

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[111] M. B. Jansen, op. cit. 89-90 gives a number of theories for Li's motives in this; See also Jung-pang, op. cit. 265-6; S. Spector, Li Hung-chang and the Huai Army (Seattle, Washington 1964) 267-8; the Straits Free Press of 2 Aug. 1900, in FO 17/1718, Claims that it was due to "the characteristic Chinese policy of buying over troublesome enemies." Sir Henry Blake, however, recognised the fact that "His Excellency has his ambitions and assuming the worst has happened in Peking, he will be prepared to come forward as a candidate for any position for which he can secure the support of the Powers," Blake to C.O. 6 July, 1900, (confidential) in CO 129/300.

[112] M. B. Jansen, op. cit. 86; Ch'en Chun-sheng, "Keng-tzu Hui-chou chi'i-i chi" in HHKM I, 235-7 Straits Free Press of 2 Aug. 1900, in FO 17/1718; Blake to C.O. 6 July, 1900 (confidential) in CO 129/300, and Blake tel. C.O. 13 July, 1900, ibid.

head of police in Canton to a certain Mr. Ts'ai (Tsoi), until recently employed by Blake in the New Territories. Ts'ai was summoned to Canton, told of Li's ambitions, and duly reported everything to Blake on his return.[113] On the other hand, upon receipt of Li's invitation, the revolutionaries in Hong Kong, on the initiative of Ho Ch'i, also drafted a petition to Blake. The document sought to make clear the programme of the revolutionaries, and appealed to the British government for help, or a least neutrality, in the event of military action.[114] The stage was now set for Blake to bring the two parties to what he hoped would be a real partnership.

Sun Yat-sen, however, did not trust Li Hung-chang enough to risk his neck by going to Canton for the interview, so a meeting was arranged between the revolutionaries and Li's deputy, Liu Hsüeh-hsün, in Hong Kong. As Sun was still under the 1896 Banishment order against him, he remained on board the "Nippon Maru" when it arrived on 18 June, sending his Japanese friends Miyazaki

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[113] Memorandum of Ts'ai's interview with Li, in Blake to C.O. 6 July 1900, ibid. Blake's reaction to this was favourable from the start: "I think that having regard to the present state of the North, such a movement is very probable and that we ought to be prepared to look after our interests not only on the Yangtze but also on the West River," Blake tel. C.O. July, 1900, ibid. From the Foreign Office came the remark, "The Governor is a firm believer in Li Hung-chang," F.O. Minutes on Blake to C.O. of 6 July, 1900 (confidential) ibid. Li also revealed his ambitions to Sir John Lister-Kaye, groom-in- waiting to King Edward VII, through his secretary Tseng Kwang-chuen. Lister-Kaye now urged that the British Government should give it full support. See Lister-Kaye to Bertie, 25 Aug. 1900 (private) in FO 17/1445.

[114] Sun Yat-sen, Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary (Taiwan, 1953) p. 196; M. B. Jansen, op. cit. 86-91; Lo Hsiang-lin, Kuo-fu chih ta-hsüeh shih-tai (Taiwan, 1954) 82; Kuo-fu yü Ou-Mei chih yu-hao (Taiwan, 1951) 86-91; Feng Tzu-yu, op. cit. I, 77, IV, 92-6; Lo Chia-lun, op. cit. I, 92-3; Ch'en Shao-pai, op. cit. 109b; Chou Lu, Chung-kuo Kuo-min-t'ang shih-kao (Shanghai, 1938) I, 34-5; T'ang Chen-ch'u, Kuo-fu shu-hsin hsüan-chi (Taipei, 1952) 18-21; Ku Yen-shih, op. cit. 149-52. The original petition in English could not be found among the official archives.

Torazō, Uchida Ryōhei and Kiyofuji Kōshichirō to the meeting with Liu.[115] Subsequently it was decided that since Li had wished it to be a united movement, they should also enlist K'ang's group of reformers in the project. The relations between reformers and revolutionaries had become much strained by 1900, it was true: but the prospect of an attempt to shake off Manchu rule, at least in the South, and with the active support of the Canton Viceroy, had appealed sufficiently to the revolutionaries to try and seek K'ang's cooperation once more. The three Japanese were thus sent to see K'ang in Singapore, while Sun sailed on to Saigon.[116]

Unfortunately, K'ang Yu-wei was still intractable with regard to working with the revolutionaries. On 5 July, as soon as he heard of the arrival of the Japanese with the specific purpose of meeting him, K'ang informed the Singapore police, suggesting that they were assassins out to gain rewards offered for his capture. He also claimed that he had received warning letters and telegrams about the three Japanese.[117] Accordingly, Miyazaki and Kiyofuji were arrested by special order of the Governor on 6 July (Uchida had returned suddenly to Hong Kong). On being searched, a sharp Japanese sword was found on each, and more than $27,000 in foreign currency between the two. Swettenham deemed this

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[115] Miyazaki had long known Sun Yat-sen and been his constant colleague in his revolutionary activities. Uchida was a politician with rightist inclinations, and Kiyofuji, a political agitator, was drawn into the Chinese revolutionary movement through the influence of Uchida.

[116] Li Hung-chang, op. cit. "Tien Kao" chüan 22, p. 26b; M. B. Jansen, op. cit. 87-8; Feng Tzu-yu, op. cit. IV, 96.

[117] Swettenham to C.O. 26 July, 1900, CO 273/257. This seemed rather unfair, as Miyazaki was the same Japanese who helped K'ang escape to Japan in 1898, and offered him hospitality there. This was asserted in Miyazaki's statement on being arrested. Lo Jung-pang, op. cit. 265-8, however, gives credence to K'ang's theory regarding the motives of the Japanese, based on the fact that Liu Hsüeh-hsün bore a personal grudge against the reformers, and thus it was possible that some money found on Miyazaki could have been paid him by Liu to carry out the assassination of K'ang.

sufficiently incriminating evidence that they constituted a threat to public peace in Singapore. On 9 July, Sun Yat-sen arrived in Singapore, to explain that the money belonged to himself, and that the real purpose of the Japanese in visiting Singapore was to seek K'ang's cooperation "about present Chinese matters."[118] Nonetheless, Swettenham was convinced that should K'ang refuse to work with them, it was their purpose "to proceed to any lengths to prevent him interfering with their schemes."[119] Therefore, on 11 July, the two Japanese were banished from Singapore for five years,[120] though it was felt at the Colonial Office that Swettenham had acted in a rather high-handed manner.[121] It certainly helped to end all hopes of cooperation between the reformers and revolutionaries.

Sun and his Japanese friends then left Singapore for Hong Kong. Meanwhile, on 12 July, Li received a further Imperial edict urging his return to the North. By now the situation in Peking had become desperate, and Li was appointed plenipotentiary to negotiate with the Powers. This was the authority that Li had been waiting for, and he decided to take up his responsibilities in Peking, leaving Canton on the 17th.[122] It has been contended that in reality

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[118] Sun's statement, enclosed in Swettenham to C.O. 26 July, 1900, ibid.

[119] Swettenham to C.O., 26 July, ibid.

[120] ibid, and Swettenham Memo, of 12 July, 1900, enclosed in Swettenham to C.O. 26 July, ibid. See also Wang Gung-wu, "Sun Yat-sen and Singapore" in Journal of the South Seas Society, XV (Dec. 1959) 57-8; Miyazaki Torazo, op. cit. 78-89; Chih Kuei, op. cit. 8-9; "A Reminiscence from Singapore" in the Hong Kong Daily Press, 9 Nov. 1911, p. 3 col. 5.

[121] Stubbs Minutes on Swettenham to C.O. 26 July 1900, CO 273/257.

[122] Scott tel. F.O. 13 July, 1900, FO 17/1422; C. Tan, op. cit. 124; Li Hung-chang, op. cit. "Tien Kao" chüan 24, p. 26.

Li had neither the determination, courage nor military strength to realize his scheme for the independence of the South.[123] Nevertheless Sir Henry Blake had not given up hope. He now saw a chance of bringing Sun and Li to a personal confrontation under his aegis. On the one hand, Blake asked for instructions that when Sun arrived in Hong Kong, he should be empowered to waive the 1896 Banishment order against him and allow Sun to land.[124] His wording was such as to imply that Sun was returning to the Colony with the approval of Li Hung-chang,[125] and his request was granted, with a warning against Sun's conspiratorial activities.[126] On the other hand, Blake also requested permission that when Li was due to pass through the Colony on 18 July on his way to Shanghai, he should be detained in Hong Kong until further instructions from London. Li had also been appointed to his old post as Viceroy of Chihli on the 17th, and Blake now sought to justify his request by the argument: "His appointment must have been by Prince Tuan, who has usurped the government. Shall we recognise this and allow him to proceed?"[127] Blake felt that Li's position was "difficult" and that he "may not object to pressure being put on him to remain" in the South.[128]

Although the British Government still wished that Li should not go North,[129]

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[123] Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, "Li Hung-chang" in Yin-ping-shih ho-chi (Shanghai, 1936) XVIII, 70.

[124] Blake tel. C.O. 13 July, 1900, 129/300.

[125] This was the impression of Lucas at the Colonial Office, see Lucas Minutes on above, ibid.

[126] C.O. tel. Blake, 17 July, 1900, CO 129/302.

[127] Blake tel. C.O. 17 July, 1900, CO 129/300.

[128] Blake tel. C.O. 14 July, 1900, ibid.

[129] See F.O. tel. Scott, 14 July 1900, FO 17/1422; Warren tel. F.O. 14 July, 1900, FO 17/1427, and Campbell's Minutes: "There seems to be a concurrence of opinion that Li is very much better where he is, and suggestions even made that he be detained by force."

it was also clear that they could not force him to remain.[130] Accordingly, Li passed through the Colony briefly on the morning of 18 July, and though he met with Blake, there was little the Governor could do once Li's mind had been made up, and he had abandoned the idea of aligning with the revolutionaries.[131]

On their part, the Chinese revolutionaries never really expected Li's proposition to be carried out, for at this time they were completing their plans for the Waichow rising. Meetings were held on board the "Sado Maru" which brought Sun and the Japanese into Hong Kong on 17 July, 1900, and their objective was again to capture Canton. But the 1895 experience had taught the Hsing Chung Hui that it would have been wiser not to start the attempt in the city, but to seize the maritime area first and then march inward. The goal of the 1900 rising was thus to be the city of Waichow, about one hundred miles East of Canton. The governor-general of Formosa, Kodama Gentaro, had earlier sent an emissary to Sun Yat-sen promising material support if a serious situation should arise in the South of China.[132] The final plans were therefore that Sun should proceed to Formosa via Japan, where he was to prepare reinforcements and wait till the rising had started before returning to the South. The direction of activities in Hong Kong and Waichow was left in the hands of Cheng Shih-liang, assisted by the three Japanese. Yang Ch'ü-yün, Li Ch'i-t'ang and Ch'en Shao-pai were to remain in Hong Kong to recruit financial and military aid.

On 20 July Sun returned to Japan on board the same vessel to purchase

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[130] C.O. tel. Blake, 17 July, 1900, CO 129/300 and F.O. tel. Warren 14 July 1900, FO 17/1426.

[131] Blake to C.O. 19 July 1900, CO 129/300. See also China Mail of 18 July 1900, p. 2 col. 5-7.

[132] Kodama's sympathies for Sun Yat-sen and his movement, and the reasons for them, is dealt with in M. B. Jansen, op. cit. 94-99.

fire-arms. Cheng Shih-liang also left for Waichow, together with Huang Fu, an important Triad leader who rallied enormous support for the rising. Shih Chien-ju, a recent member of the Hsing Chung Hui, Teng Yin-nan and others left for Canton. By August 1900, preparations were practically complete, and Cheng Shih-liang had assembled about six hundred men from the secret societies of Kwangtung. The operation was to be directed from San-chou-t'ien, a coastal area. Everything was ready for the final outbreak.[133]

From the first, Blake seemed to have considerable knowledge of the activities of the revolutionaries. He had seen "some Chinese gentlemen who are deeply interested in the Reform Movement,"[134] and known in great detail their plans for the uprising, especially from an American supporter of the movement, the military strategist Homer Lea.[135] But instead of putting a stop to these conspiracies, Blake sought to help them achieve by peaceful means and with the cooperation of the British government, what they aimed at:[136]

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[133] M. B. Jansen, op. cit. 92-4; Miyazaki Torazō, op. cit. 91-3; Ch'en Shao-pai, op. cit. 91-110; T'ang Leang-li, The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution (London 1930) 30-2; Tse Tsan-tai, op. cit. 19; Ch'en Ch'un-sheng, op. cit. in HHKM I, 253; Chou Lu, op. cit. III, 664-5.

[134] Blake to C.O. 3 Aug. 1900, (confidential) CO 129/300.

[135] Lea was a young and wealthy hunch-back who took an unusual interest in the Chinese reform and revolutionary movements. He met K'ang Yu-wei in Canton in 1898, and in 1900 in Hong Kong made the acquaintance of Sun Yat-sen. From then on he became Sun's "Chief of Staff" and styled himself "General." Among other things, he tried to raise an army in California for the Chinese Revolution. He returned to China with Sun in 1911. See his book "The Valor of Ignorance"(New York, 1924) and the Introduction by Clare Boothe, p. 8-31; a review of the book by Col. J. E. Edmonds is in Alston's Memo. of 9 April, 1910, in FO 371/870. Sun described his meeting with Lea in "My Reminiscenses" in the Strand Magazine XLIII (Mar. 1912) 301-7. See also C. Glick, Double Ten (New York, 1945) 26-248.

[136] Blake to C.O. 3 Aug. 1901 (confidential) CO 129/300.

> "I suggested that instead of creating disturbances, the leaders might prepare a numerously signed petition to the Powers showing clearly the reforms they demand, and stating that they took this course impelled by the desire to avoid any action that would embarrass the Powers in the present crisis in the hope that when the ultimate arrangements are being made, their demands will be insisted upon and conceded without loss of life and property, and the general derangement that must follow an armed rebellion."

And again, he suggested that if they abstained from operations, Britain would help them to secure their demands at the Boxer negotiations and that he should be empowered to make the revolutionaries such a promise.[137] The British government could hardly be expected to concur with his proposals, which would place it in an awkward position with regard to the Chinese government, not to say international relations, if the question of Blake's promises were to be brought up at the Boxer settlements. Blake was therefore firmly instructed to put a stop to all insurrectionary actions in Hong Kong, and deport all agitators.[138] With these directions, there was little else Blake could do for the revolutionary party, though he continued to show a marked sympathy for the movement even after the uprising.

The Waichow rising began on 5 October, 1900, and there were initial successes for the revolutionaries. The whole maritime area between Waichow and Siu-yang was occupied. Cheng Shih-liang then delayed action because of the shortage of arms, and waited for reinforcements to come from Sun Yat-sen. At this juncture, Ch'en T'ing-wai, who had earlier been suspected of treason during the 1895 Canton rising, and Yang Ch'ü-yün suddenly began negotiations with the Chinese government concerning the possibility of surrender in return for official posts and monetary reward. The two had acted without authority from the Hsing Chung Hui, and though nothing came of the negotiations, Yang was to

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[137] Blake tel. C.O. 18 Aug. 1900, ibid.

[138] C.O. tel. Blake, 26 Aug. 1900 (secret) CO 129/302.

bring sufficient attention upon himself to become the object of vengeance for the Canton authorities. Meanwhile Sun was desperately sending messages to Miyazaki to hurry the shipments of ammunition. It was only then that Sun discovered he had been cheated by a Japanese merchant in the purchase of arms. A further disappointment came when the Japanese government underwent a change of ministers, and the new Cabinet of Itō Hirobumi refused to support the Chinese revolutionaries. Orders had been given to the Governor of Formosa that the export of arms from Japan into Formosa and the recruiting of Japanese officers in the Chinese revolutionary army were to be prohibited. Sun himself was to be expelled from Formosa.[139] These were severe blows to the revolutionaries, and they became the primary causes of the failure of the rising. By 22 October, the rebel forces had to disband, and the rising was ended.[140]

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[139] Sun was content with the theory that Kodama supported his movement while Ito did not, hence the change of attitude among the Japanese. But the internal political scene in Japan had much more to do with it. See M. B. Jansen, op. cit. 97-104.

[140] For the military operations of the rising, see Chou Lu, op. cit. III, 664-6; Lo Chia-lun, op. cit. I, 98-101. The success of the rebels was favourably reported in the China Mail of 4 Oct. 1900 p. 2 col. 7, and 15 Oct. 1900, p. 3 col. 1, and on 18 Oct. 1900, a translation of the manifesto issued by the revolutionaries was also given, called a "Patriotic Document." See Ch'en Shao-pai, op. cit. 110b-111b, also in HHKM I, 68-70; Ch'en Ch'un-sheng, op. cit. in HHKM I, 236-241; Blake tel. C.O. 8 Oct. 1900 CO 129/301, and Blake to C.O. 12 Oct. 1900, ibid. His despatch of 26 Oct. 1900, ibid gives the manifesto of the rebels, and of 21 Nov. 1900 (confidential) gives an account of the proceedings from a secret society participant. The Times of 16 Oct.1900, p. 3 col. 2 claimed that the movement was a concerted move by Sun Yat-sen, K'ang Yu-wei and the local Triads. Scott's account of the rising, 21 Dec. 1900, in FO 17/1422 made light of the whole incident: "During its course nearly every statement that appeared on the subject was false, or greatly exaggerated. It was never in the least formidable, and the Chinese in Canton treated the subject, when they could be induced to speak of it, with absolute indifference." This was perhaps an exaggeration in itself.

It is interesting to note Blake's attitudes during the course of these events, as they serve to shed light on his later policies when the uprising led to consequences which directly affected the interests of Hong Kong. In mid-October, at the height of the clashes between the revolutionaries and the Imperial troops, Blake received an application from Admiral Ho Ch'ang-ch'ing, in charge of the Bogue Forts, for permission to move his troops through Hong Kong territory, as this would greatly facilitate his task of dispersing the rebels. Blake refused to comply, characteristically giving his answer before consulting with the Colonial Office. He argued that if the British Government pursued a policy of non-interference in the revolt, then:[141]

> "... the granting of permission to Chinese troops to use our territory in their operations may in future produce friction in the event of the success of the rebellion, as such permission would be accepted as support of the Chinese government against the rebels, and possibly result in the abandonment of the policy which the rebels have apparently pursued up to the present of abstaining from attacks on foreigners. On the other hand, the Chinese government may consider a refusal to be unfriendly. Still, to give permission would be to depart from settled international principles ..."

Chamberlain was ready to approve Blake's reasoning,[142] but from the Foreign Office came the argument: "We urge Chinese Governors to suppress rebellion and impress upon them their responsibility. We should therefore give them the facilities to carry out our wishes."[143] Blake was thus told to let the Chinese troops pass.[144] From this dates probably Blake's unveiled animosity towards

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[141] Blake tel. C.O. 14 Oct. 1899, 129/301.

[142] Chamberlain Minutes on above, ibid.

[143] Bertie Minutes, ibid.

[144] C.O. tel. Blake, 17 Oct. 1900, ibid.

Admiral Ho. Blake reflected later that though he adopted an attitude of absolute neutrality during the rising, he found the rebels "behaved very well while the rising lasted. We may want them yet."[145]

Soon after this there was a similar incident, when the Acting Viceroy at Canton, Te Shou, asked if he might purchase additional arms from Hong Kong for use against the revolutionaries. This time Blake approached the government at home first before replying; but he did point out that the Chinese could easily obtain their arms from the arsenals at Foochow or Shanghai.[146] Blake's views were sustained on this occasion.[147]

Thus, even though the Waichow rising was another dismal failure for the Chinese revolutionaries, through the medium of Sir Henry Blake's reports, the British government at home was made to see a side of the revolutionary movement not usually available to it. He averred that:[148]

> "... it is impossible for those who see at close quarters the results of the present system to avoid sympathising with their groping after some amelioration in their position, where the forms of justice are prostituted to licensed cupidity, where every yamen is a torture chamber, and even light offences are punished with a ferocity regulated by the ability of the accused to bribe the officials ..."

and again:

> "One cannot live within a morning's journey of such an Inferno without feeling some pity for people who having seen different systems on their borders, have begun to yearn for some advance involving the principles of justice and mercy."

Blake did not seem to be the only observer who urged that the Powers, and especially Great Britain, should exert themselves in helping China find her

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[145] Blake to Satow, 29 Dec. 1900, PRO 30/33, 9/16.

[146] Blake tel. C.O. 25 Oct. 1900, CO 129/301.

[147] F.O. tel. Satow, 30 Oct. FO 17/1417.

[148] The extracts are from his despatch to C.O. of 26 Oct. 1900 (confidential) in CO 129/301.

own salvation. The North China Herald blamed the Foreign Office for its inactivity during the reform movement of 1898, which it claimed was the real cause of the present rebellion. "It is to be hoped that we shall not be induced, ... to assist the government in repressing it, and thus help to fix the corrupt yoke of the Manchus, whose misgovernment is the cause of these risings, on the neck of China for another term of years."[149] At home, the London and China Express too, voiced its complaint: " ... and the worst feature is that so far the British government shows no signs of any activity, or that it is prepared to take that leading position in the settlement of the Chinese question which the preponderance of our interests in China entitles it to assume."[150]

On the other hand, it was to Blake's credit that because of his remarkable sympathy for the Chinese people, he launched a successful campaign against an undesirable practice in the Chinese judicial system and its extradition agreements with the British government. His attention, already drawn to the anomalies of the system, was particularly arrested by the case of the revolutionary Shih Chien-ju. Shih had been sent to Canton to prepare for the capture of the city in connection with the Waichow rising. While waiting for news, Shih conceived of a plan to start a disturbance in Canton, and thus distract the attention of the authorities from the activities at Waichow. He decided to blow up the yamen of the Acting Viceroy Te Shou with several hundred pounds of dynamite. With the help of a chemist Yang Hsiang-fu, a preacher of the American Presbyterian Mission Liu Chin-chou, and another Christian Sung Shao-tung, who hired a house for Shih's use, the plot was carried out on 28 October, 1900, when Shih planted the explosives at the yamen. Not hearing the explosion at

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[149] North China Herald of 17 Oct. 1900, p. 801-2, leading article.

[150] London and China Express of 19 Oct. 1900, p. 877, col. 2, leading article.

the expected time, Shih returned to investigate, re-set the dynamite, and then stayed till the yamen exploded. He was thus caught on the spot, and was executed on 9 November by order of the Acting Viceroy, who escaped unharmed.[151] The main point of controversy about his trial was a confession Shih allegedly made which implicated a number of Chinese in Hong Kong in the revolutionary movement, and that Yang Ch'ü-yün was said to be the instigator of the Canton yamen plot. The Canton government now requested the extradition of Yang, which Blake refused on the grounds that it was based on information in Shih's confession, extracted under torture.[152] The elimination of torture applied to Chinese prisoners, at least to those extradited from Hong Kong, thus became the focal point of Blake's humanitarian campaign.

As early as in August, 1899, the Chinese Minister in London had complained to the Foreign Office that it was increasingly difficult to obtain the extradition of Chinese criminals from Hong Kong owing to the obstructive policy of the Hong Kong government. He charged that though the extradition arrangements were based on Article XXI of the Treaty of Tientsin, 1858, which made no distinction between political and non-political offences, the Hong Kong authorities had now given it an "erroneous construction" by interpreting it in the light of the Acts of 1870 and 1873, which discriminated between the two kinds of crimes. He pointed to the "danger of allowing Chinese criminal fugitives in Hong Kong to abuse the technicalities of British law in order to thwart

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[151] Accounts of Shih's attempt are given in Chou Lu, op. cit. III, 671-2; Ch'en Shao-pai, op. cit. 112-112b; Teng Mu-han, "Shih Chien-ju shih-lüeh" in HHKM I, 245-8; Liao P'ing-tzu, "Shih Chien-ju an shih-i" in HHKM I, 249-50; the China Mail of 29 Oct. 1900, p. 2 col. 6; the Times of 31 Oct. 1900, p. 3 col. 2; Scott to F.O. 21 Dec. 1900, FO 17/1422; North China Herald of 5 Dec. 1900, p. 1190-1; Blake to Satow, 29 Dec. 1900, PRO 30/33, 9/16.

[152] Blake to C.O. 31 May 1901, CO 129/305, which enclosed the request from the Acting Viceroy to Scott, 23 Nov. 1900.

the requisitions of the Chinese government for their surrender."[153] From Hong Kong Blake retorted that he was not aware of irregularities in the working of the Chinese Extradition Ordinance, and Chamberlain agreed that alterations of the present system were undesirable.[154] Even Lord Salisbury felt that the "cruel punishments inflicted by the Chinese made the execution of the extradition laws very difficult."[155]

Soon after this, a series of cases arose in which pirates and robbers were extradited from Hong Kong, tortured in Chinese prisons, had confessions extracted from them, and then executed; by the time of the Shih Chien-ju case, Blake had decided that this condition of things should not be continued. He therefore refused to hand over any man from Hong Kong in the future, unless a British official would be allowed at the trial to ensure that no torture was applied to the prisoner.[156] To obtain such a condition, Blake needed the cooperation of the British Consulate at Canton to argue the case with the Chinese authorities there. Unfortunately, Scott the Consul-General was disinclined to see matters in the same light as the Hong Kong government. It was not unreasonable to expect that Scott, being closer to the workings of the Chinese government in Canton, probably realized the difficulties of effecting such a departure from their traditional judicial practices. Nevertheless, he did exhibit a marked unwillingness to exert himself in this direction from the

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[153] Lo Feng-lu to C.O. 2 Aug. 1899, FO 17/1397.

[154] Blake to C.O. 8 Nov. 1899, CO 129/294 and C.O. to F.O. 18 Jan. 1900, FO 17/1436.

[155] Satow Memo. on Lo to F.O. 2 Aug. 1899, FO 17/1397.

[156] Blake to C.O. 31 May 1901, CO 129/305.

very beginning. He argued that despite all promises to the contrary, torture could still be exercised in the privacy of Chinese prisons, that he must do his duty to assist the Chinese in getting their criminals, and finally apologising for his divergence of opinion, he thought the matter had better be left to the British Minister in Peking.[157]

In Peking, Sir Ernest Satow (1843-1929) had succeeded Sir Claude MacDonald as Minister in October, 1900. Satow had served five years as Minister in Japan and was widely admired for his scholarship and understanding of the Oriental character. His going out to Peking was personally recommended by Lord Salisbury, who thought "the situation required the presence of someone with more coolness ... more experience and authority"[158] for the difficult task of negotiating the Boxer terms with the Chinese government. His appointment was therefore generally commended, and he was felt to be "without doubt just the man for the position."[159] In this respect, he also proved to be the

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[157] See the correspondence between Scott and J. H. S. Lockhart, Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong, 15 March 1900 - 15 January 1901, enclosed in Blake to C.O. 31 May 1901, CO 129/305. Scott was unmoved by Blake's persuasion: "If you could secure this privilege, H. E. (Blake) ventures to think you will hereafter look back upon our diplomatic victory with lively satisfaction" ibid.

[158] Sanderson to Satow, 11 Aug. 1900, and F.O. to Satow, 18 Aug. 1900 (confidential) PRO 30/33, 7/1.

[159] Extract from "M. A. P." London, 9 Sept. 1900, in PRO 30/33, 10/10. See also North China Herald of 17 Oct. 1900, p. 820 col. 1, and 3 Dec. 1902, p. 1161-2; W. Hillier to Satow, 30 Oct. 1900, PRO 30/33, 7/9; B. M. Allen, The Rt. Hon. Sir Ernest Satow, a Memoir (London 1933) 123-7; Sir Ernest Satow, A Diplomat in Japan (London, 1921) and Lansdowne to Satow, 14 Nov. 1900, Satow to Lansdowne 15 Nov. 1900, FO 800/118 when the two men agreed to work closely together in the affairs of China. A recent biography of Satow based on his diaries is written by George A. Lensen, Korea and Machuria between Russia and Japan 1895-1904, the Observations of Sir Ernest Satow (Florida, 1966) 1-39.

right person to cooperate with Blake in putting pressure on the Canton government to comply with the reform initiated by the Hong Kong authorities. When appealed to, Satow immediately ruled that "a Consular or Colonial official should attend every hearing, including the final one at which sentence is pronounced. That would, it appears to me, furnish the desired guarantee (that no torture is used)"[160] All Scott's objections were thus overruled, and the Consul-General in fact found the Canton Viceroy quite easily persuaded "to give the arrangement a trial."[161]

Blake was immensely satisfied with his achievement. When thanking Satow for his support, he reflected:[162]

> "Some of my people here cannot understand why I should care whether a Chinaman is tortured or not, but in the case of a surrendered prisoner, I feel that every turn of the screw or shock of the wedge was inflicted through the folds of the British flag ... "

And again, to the Colonial Office:[163]

> "The miseries of China are largely due to the custom of insisting upon a confession before execution, regardless of evidence produced. To extract a confession, torture is applied which results in a crushing mass of injustice. There are many forces in China today making for a change in the horrible system, and I cherish the hope that the action of the Hong Kong government in breaking down the custom in cases of extradition may hasten the coming of a change in this respect, that every well-wisher of China and of humanity must hail with satisfaction."

Having gone so far through Blake, the Colonial Office now took up the challenge, and sought to extend the temporary arrangments between Hong Kong and

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[160] Satow's views enclosed in Lockhart to Scott, 2 May 1901, CO 129/305.

[161] Blake to C.O. 31 May, 1901 ibid.

[162] Blake to Satow, 12 May 1901, PRO 30/33, 9/16.

[163] Blake to C.O. 31 May 1901, CO 129/305. See also his expression of satisfaction in a speech prior to his final departure from the Colony, reported in the Hong Kong Daily Press of 23 Nov. 1903.

Canton to all Chinese criminals extradited from British territory to China (therefore including Wei-hai-wei) and to have the rule made permanent.[164] Once again Satow supported the move, and negotiations were quickly completed with the Viceroy at Canton and the Governor at Shantung.[165] Blake's sense of achievement was therefore increased two-fold. Campbell reflected: "Sir Henry Blake is quite satisfied - a rare occurrence."[166]

One unfortunate sequel to the story, however, was the fact that though Blake had never got on well with the Consul-General at Canton from the start, this lack of mutual understanding was now brought out into the open during the foregoing negotiations. It was made worse by the circumstance of Blake and Satow working so much in agreement, and jointly bringing pressure to bear on Scott. Blake complained in undisguised tones: " ... with every respect for Mr. Scott's anxiety not to venture outside the beaten path in the interests of necessity, I cannot help feeling that if Mr. Warren or Mr. Fraser were either of them in his place, there would not be the slightest difficulty in the matter ... I have felt throughout that with a Consul anxious to secure it locally, the matter might have been quietly arranged without any necessity for correspondence with Peking ... "[167] Scott soon asked for permission for leave, in August 1901, with the intention of retiring soon after.[168] When R. Tower of the Peking Legation was sent on a tour of the Yangtze ports and the South, he reported:

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[164] This was C.O. to F.O. 26 July, 1901, CO 129/305.

[165] F.O. to Satow, 16 Aug. 1901, FO 17/1468, and Satow to F.O. 18 Jan. 1902, CO 129/314.

[166] Campbell Minutes on C.O. to F.O. 20 Oct. 1901, FO 17/1510.

[167] Blake to Satow, 25 Feb. 1901, PRO 30/33, 9/16.

[168] Satow Tel. Lansdowne, 31 May 1901, PRO 30/33, 7/1.

"I believe the Consul-General at Canton is thoroughly inefficient ..., lack of cooperation with Governor of Hong Kong and general weakness in dealing with British interests have been conspicuous."[169] and again, "B. C. G. Scott ... is neither in touch with the Consuls in two Kwang provinces, nor is he on decent terms with Sir Henry Blake. Add to this, he is a laughing stock of the members of the British community who are able to find humour in a situation which involves a disregard of British interests, at the time like the present when other nations, particularly the French, are represented by a strong man with strong methods ... "[170] James Scott (1850-1920) until recently Consul at Swatow, was appointed to Canton to replace B. C. G. Scott in 1902.

It will be remembered that soon after the capture of Shih Chien-ju in 1900, the Canton Viceroy applied for the extradition of Yang Ch'ü-yün from Hong Kong, based on a sentence in Shih's confession: "I first made acquaintances with Yang Chu Yun in the 8th moon of this year he seeing that I was in earnest appointed me as General Director for Canton but gave me no credentials." (sic)[171] The application was refused by Blake, because aside from its being obtained under torture, the only statement in it regarding some money sent to the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank at Shameen, which could be verified, was found to be untrue.[172] This being the case, the Acting Viceroy Te Shou, who was determined

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[169] Tower tel. Satow, 6 June, 1901, PRO 30/33, 7/7.

[170] Tower tel. Satow, 7 June, 1901, ibid.

[171] A copy of the confession is enclosed in Scott to Lockhart, 31 Dec. 1900, CO 129/305.

[172] Blake engaged the cooperation of the General Manager of the Bank, Sir Thomas Jackson, who searched the books for the past two years, and found that no money had ever been remitted to any Chinese in Shameen. See Blake to C.O. 31 May 1901, ibid.

to wreak vengeance on the revolutionaries, now instigated two crimes to be committed in Hong Kong which grossly violated the territorial integrity of the Colony, and which makes it easier to understand Sir Henry Blake's mounting annoyance at the methods of the Canton authorities throughout this period. He would not, perhaps, have been so sympathetic towards the Chinese revolutionaries had the Chinese government not driven him in this direction by their ruthless and often ill-advised attempts to suppress the growth of the revolutionary movement.

Blake refused the extradition application on 8 January, 1901, and on 10 January, Yang Ch'ü-yün was murdered by a gang of four assassins while he was holding an evening class at his home in Hong Kong. The assassins escaped in the subsequent confusion, and the crime caused a considerable sensation in the Colony.[173] Before he died in hospital the next morning, Yang made a statement:[174]

> "I, Yeung Kui Wan, knowing that I am seriously ill and not likely to recover, make the following statement:
> When I was teaching at the English school, 52 Gage Street, during explaining the business and then came in very quietly and shot me four times. I mean the murderer. I do not know him. I know the Chinese government send him down from Canton and everything to be done. I hope English government will do me a justice. That is all." (sic)

Acting on this, the Hong Kong government made extensive investigations and managed to arrest one of the gang, Wu Lao-san (Ng Lo Sam). Though the facts pointed to the crime being committed by order of the Acting Viceroy Te Shou, the evidence was not strong enough for Wu's conviction. Blake therefore suggested

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[173] Accounts of the death of Yang are given in Chou Lu, op. cit. IV, 1218; Ch'en Shao-pai, op. cit. 112b-113b, also in HHKM I, 73-4; Feng Tzu-yu, op. cit. I, 8; Hong Kong Sessional Papers 1902, 101; China Mail 11 Jan. 1901, p. 2 col. 7; North China Herald 23 Jan. 1901, p. 155 col. 2.

[174] Blake to C.O. 6 July, 1901, (confidential) CO 129/305.

that Wu be banished from the Colony, and a demand made to the Canton government for an explanation and a sum of $20,000 paid as reparation for Yang's family.[175] His claims, however, were not favourably received by the Colonial Office or the Consul-General at Canton. The Colonial Office approved his banishment of Wu, but felt that "the proposal to base a claim against the Chinese government on this very nebulous evidence seems to me to border on the ridiculous."[176] Scott in Canton, too, made a careful study of the evidence, and concluded that though Wu was obviously implicated in the crime, there was no concrete proof of his being connected with the Canton officials. One was forced to the view that the Chinese authorities secretly connived at the crime, but Scott felt it was "only a moral conviction and ... it cannot, unsupported by clear and independent evidence, constitute the sole basis for diplomatic action in demanding an explanation and reparation."[177] The case was thus shelved.

In the meantime, Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai, Li Chi-t'ang and a number of other revolutionaries in Hong Kong rallied the support of Jung Hung and Hung Ch'üan-fu, a relative of Hung Hsiu-ch'üan and veteran of the Taiping rebellion, and decided to raise another insurrection in Canton. The attempt, however, was independent, and neither the Hsing Chung Hui nor Sun Yat-sen was involved.[178] They began planning in September, 1901, and Hung brought in large numbers of secret society adherents. The conspirators called their movement the T'ai-p'ing

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[175] ibid.

[176] Stubbs Minutes on above, ibid.

[177] Scott to F.O. 17 Dec. 1901, FO 17/1492.

[178] Hsieh had denounced revolutionary activities after the 1895 failure, but the death of his close friend Yang Ch'ü-yün must have stirred him deeply.

Shun-t'ien Kuo (Peaceful Heavenly Kingdom) and if the attempt was successful, they aimed to establish a provisional government under the presidency of Jung Hung. The intention was to move on 28 January, 1903, it being the eve of the Chinese New Year, and all government officials would be gathered for a ceremony in the Wan Shou Kung, just outside the city. The revolutionaries thus intended to blow up the Wan Shou Palace and seize the artillery, while the rebel forces would march in from five directions.[179]

The Hong Kong government, however, had got wind of their plans since 22 January. On 25 January, a raid was made on their headquarters and eight men were arrested on a charge of fitting out a military expedition against a friendly power.[180] The information was relayed to Canton, and on the 28th, several cargo boats loaded with military equipment were seized, and some twenty-five men arrested. The leaders, however, had all escaped and the attempt fizzled out.[181]

In the history of the Chinese revolutionary movement, this 1903 attempt on Canton was probably one of the least significant, in that it was

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[179] See Ch'en Ch'un-sheng, "Jen-yin Hung Ch'üan-fu Kuang-chou chü-i chi" in HHKM I, 315-8; Tse Tsan-tai, op. cit. 1620-3; Lo Hsiang-lin, "Jung Hung yü Chung-kuo hsin-wen-hua yün-tung chih ch'i-fa" in Hsin Ya Hsüeh Pao I, 1 (Feb. 1956); Chou Lu, op. cit. III, 674-5; China Mail 28 Jan. 1903, p. 4 col. 6; Ku-lung tang-an kuan, "Hung Ch'üan-fu ch'i-i tang-an" in HHKM, I, 322-30.

[180] When Blake telegraphed home this information, the Colonial Office refused to believe him. See C.O. Minutes on Blake tel. of 26 Jan. 1903 (secret) CO 129/316: "Sir Henry Blake's secret information does not always prove to be accurate."

[181] It was reputed that the leakage of the conspiracy had come from a local artillery store, which had failed to supply the arms ordered by Li Ch'i-t'ang and instead revealed the plans to the authorities. See Tse Tsan-tai, op. cit. p. 23. See also the Times of 29 Jan. 1903, p. 3 col. 4; Blake to C.O. 29 Jan. 1903 (confidential) CO 129/316; North China Herald of 4 Feb. 1903, p. 204, col. 2; Lt. Col. C. M. Ducat, Military Attache in China to F.O. 8 Feb. 1903, FO 17/1616.

more in the nature of a Triad uprising than a political revolt. Yet Sir Henry Blake and other contemporary observers seemed to credit it with more importance than it warranted. Blake, informed of the meticulous preparations the revolutionaries had made in the way of uniforms, arms, flags and proclamations, reported "This takes the movement out of the category of a mere dash on Canton for the purpose of plunder, and would indicate an intention to carry out a more or less military operation,"[182] and later, "This movement, originally reported as a Triad movement having for its object the assassination of the officials in Canton, ... is I now think a reform movement, pure and simple ... "[183] The Times described " ... foreign missionaries and well-informed local Chinese appear to regard success as within the bounds of possibility, believing that the organization is more complete than is usual with things Chinese."[184] And the China Mail correspondent, asking a Chinese in Canton "How many Cantonese dislike the Manchus?" received the reply, "Out of every ten, eleven hate them."[185]

There is also much talk of German intrigue in the movement, for the fact that much of the revolutionaries' military equipment was stored in the premises of the Berlin Mission in Canton, and the compradore of the German firm of Pustan and Co. had been the medium for the purchase of arms. It was also discovered that many of those arrested in Canton were converts of the German Missionaires. Blake had even more definite proof: he was informed

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[182] Blake to C.O. 29 Jan. 1903, (confidential) CO 129/316.

[183] Blake to Lucas, 31 Jan. 1903 (private) ibid. Fiddian at the Colonial Office remarked "To talk of this armed rebellion against the dynasty as a reform movement is childish." ibid.

[184] The Times, 29 Jan. 1903, p. 3 col. 4.

[185] China Mail, 3 Feb. 1903, p. 5 col. 1.

that if the movement was successful, Germany would pose as the "Protector" of the separate South China, and have a quid pro quo. "This accounts for a statement of the German Consul at Canton that he was worked to death, though at the time (ten days ago) I know that he could not be busied with trade matters. The German Admiral who is in harbour, declined an invitation to dinner here, as he is going to Canton today. I wonder if he too, is cognizant of the plot ..."[186]

Despite such suspicions, however, Blake came to regret somewhat the part played by the Hong Kong government in frustrating this movement. The men arrested in Hong Kong were soon discharged on lack of evidence to convict, and Blake even blamed the police for being "precipitous in making the arrests without solid grounds, but there is not a superfluity of brains in the force, and caution is a rare virtue, especially in police dealings with China."[187] He also felt that the new Consul-General in Canton had relayed too much information regarding the plot than was absolutely necessary. "We are not called upon to act as the police of China. I see that his zeal has carried him beyond his discretion."[188] The action of both the Hong Kong police and James Scott was strenuously defended by the Colonial Office, though C. P. Lucas, to whom Blake confided his private feelings, seemed confused by Blake's attitudes, and concluded, "The worst of it is that all these movements are national movements, and in supporting the Chinese government we are running counter to a great

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[186] Blake to Lucas, 31 Jan. 1903, (private) CO 129/316. See also Ducat to F.O. 8 Feb. 1903, FO 17/1616, Scott to F.O. 14 Feb. 1903, FO 17/1608, and 16 Apr. 1903, ibid in which he reported that the German Consul, accompanied by a deputy appointed by the Viceroy, searched in vain at the Berlin Mission for further signs of revolutionary activity.

[187] Blake to Lucas, 31 Jan. 1903, (private) CO 129/316.

[188] ibid.

amount of patriotic feeling."[189]

Yet the Chinese government at Canton was much annoyed at such "patriotic feelings" and the news of the release of the revolutionaries arrested in Hong Kong was received with surprise.[190] In London, Chang Te-yi had succeeded Lo Feng-lu as Chinese Minister in November 1901,[191] and Chang now protested to the Foreign Office against this action of the Hong Kong government, urging at the same time the expulsion of the men involved.[192] This Note was accepted at the Colonial Office with mixed feelings; Fiddes felt that the Chinese protest was not without reason, as the banishment of Sun Yat-sen had set a precedent for such circumstances. Lucas however, suggested that "There is another side to these banishments. The Chinese hope by persuading the Hong Kong government to banish, to get men into their powers, and they may be not conspirators in the ordinary sense."[193] By the time Blake's reply to the Note reached London, however, another political murder had been perpetrated in Hong Kong, similar to the Yang Ch'ü-yün case, which came as a direct result of the 1903 rising. Blake was therefore armed with a counter-charge against the Chinese government;[194]

> "While this government will perform its duty in preventing the colony from being made a base of operations against Canton, the result of which would be injurious to our trade which must suffer from any serious disturbance, the assassination of persons in Hong Kong who may be obnoxious to the Chinese government is intolerable. This is the second case that has been reported ... There is no doubt this murder was also arranged by the Cantonese authorities, and if the evidence warrants it, I shall demand satisfaction for the gross violation of our territory."

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[189] Lucas Minutes, ibid.

[190] China Mail 9 Feb. 1903, p. 5 col. 3

[191] See Tower to F.O. 14 Nov. 1901, FO 17/1480 for an account of Chang's career.

[192] Chang Ta-jen to F.O., 26 Feb. 1903, FO 17/1611.

[193] Lucas Minutes, ibid.

[194] Blake to F.O., 30 Apr. 1903, (confidential) CO 129/317.

It transpired that the authorities in Canton had offered an award of $30,000 for the capture of Hung Ch'üan-fu and $20,000 for his assassination. This was enough to instigate another brutal murder in Hong Kong. On 8 March, a man named Chang Cho-t'ing (Cheung Cho-ting) rented a flat in Hong Kong. On 12 March, he went to Canton, where he became friendly with a pedlar called Wu Liu (Ng Luk), who bore some resenblance to Hung Ch'üan-fu. Chang had told Wu that he could find employment for him in Hong Kong. Wu accordingly went to see Chang at his flat on 16 March. On 25 March, Chang engaged an undertaker's launch, and with the help of coolies removed a dead body from his house. The undertaker's launch was later met outside Hong Kong harbour by a Chinese gunboat, and they proceeded to Tai-p'ing, the headquarters of Admiral Ho Ch'ang-ch'ing, where the body was taken out. Chang had evidently murdered Wu Liu, and now claimed the body to be that of Hung Ch'üan-fu. Chang was subsequently rewarded $20,000. Meanwhile, Hung was alive and had left Hong Kong on 31 March for Singapore.[195]

When the crime was discovered, Sir Henry Blake was quick to see that the action of the Chinese gunboat left no doubt of Admiral Ho's complicity in the plot. The evidence against Chang was also very strong, but there being no extradition treaty with China, and the involvment of the Chinese officials in the act making it undesirable to follow the usual course of bringing the offender to trial in a Chinese court, Blake now urged that a special case be made, and have Chang handed over for trial in Hong Kong.[196] To this Chamberlain added the further demand that the action of Admiral Ho and other officials implicated should be the subject of special representations to the Imperial government,

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[195] Ch'en Ch'ün-sheng, op. cit. in HHKM I, 318-9; Blake to C.O. 18 Jan. 1903 (confidential) CO 129/317; Hong Kong Hansard 12 July, 1904 Hong Kong Sessional Papers, 1904 505-8.

[196] Blake to C.O. 21 Aug. 1903 (confidential) CO 129/318.

with a view to their severe punishment.[197] Satow accordingly addressed the Peking government in the sense suggested,[198] and it was to the credit of the Chinese government that the incident was quickly brought to a conclusion by the removal of Admiral Ho from office, the cashiering of all minor officials who received rewards or otherwise connived at the crime, the execution of Chang in Canton in the presence of an officer from the British Consulate, and finally a letter of apology from the Viceroy to the Hong Kong government for the infringement of the Colony's territory.[199] The case was thus considered satisfactorily settled.[200]

In this instance, it was not without reason that Chinese compliance with the British demands should be so readily given, for at about the same time the Yang Ch'ü-yün murder case was being re-opened, and the Chinese government must have realized that Great Britain could hardly be expected not to view with extreme seriousness the occurrence of a second crime which again violated the sovereignty of Hong Kong.

In 1903, one of Yang's assassins returned to the Colony, and was promptly arrested on 5 April. At his trial on 20-21 May, after which he was sentenced to death, the political character and official complications of the case were

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[197] C.O. to F.O. 5 Oct. 1903, FO 17/1718.

[198] Satow to F.O. 30 Dec. 1903, ibid.

[199] C. W. Campbell (Acting Consul-General) to Satow, 13 Apr. 1904 (confidential) enclosed in Satow to F.O. 29 Apr. 1904, FO 17/1718.

[200] F.O. Minutes on Satow to F.O., 10 Sept. 1904, ibid: "We have got full satisfaction."
Hung meanwhile had died a natural death on 7 December, 1903, and was generally hailed as a true patriot for the cause of reform in China. See "The Passing of a Patriot" in the China Mail of 15 Dec.1903, p. 5 col. 2; and "Death and Burial of a Noted Rebel" in the North China Herald of 18 Dec. 1903, p. 1275, col. 3.

revealed, and strong feelings of indignation were again aroused on all sides. It was found that the four assassins had actually been hired by the Acting Viceroy Te Shou. The murder had been organised by the Chief of Police at Canton, Li Chia-chu. Yang Ch'ing-Ch'i, captain of a Chinese gunboat, had acted as intermediary between Canton and the four "braves" in Hong Kong. They had at first tried to kidnap Yang, but when this proved difficult, assassination had been resorted to. For completing the plot, the gang had been rewarded $2,000 each with buttons of the fifth official rank. The actual assassin, however, had already been executed on 25 September, 1901, by the Canton authorities. It was not known whether this had been to appease British colonial indignation, or merely a means to silence an instrument who proved troublesome to the Canton officials.

In any event, the British government was now urged to take immediate action in order to enforce the lesson that British territory could not be invaded with impunity by emissaries of the Chinese government.[201] Even the Colonial Office admitted that "The Governor does well to be angry."[202] Blake demanded that despite the non-existence of an extradition treaty with China, the other three men involved in the crime should be tried in Hong Kong, that

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[201] See the Times of 22 May 1903, p. 3 col. 1; China Mail of 22 May 1903, p. 4 col. 2, leading article; Hong Kong Daily Press of 22 May, 1903, and North China Herald of 28 May 1903, p. 1033 col. 2-3, which complained that "successive governors of Hong Kong have been too complaisant, much too ready to believe the smiling assurances of friendship which the Chinese authorities at Canton have been wont to indulge ... " The China Association, in a letter to the F.O. of 3 July, 1903, FO 17/1718 showed that in the trial, "we have a clear instance of Cantonese officials to execute vengeance on a Chinese refugee in British territory. There was no possible justification for this high-handed proceeding, and even the plea of ignorance of international law cannot be admitted."

[202] Fiddes Minutes on May to Lucas, 23 May 1903, (private) in CO 192/317.

both Te Shou and Li Chia-chu should be cashiered, and that compensation of $50,000 should be paid to Yang's family.[203] The Foreign Office admitted that it was true Hong Kong had become a sort of Alsatia for the lowest criminals of Southern China, but " ... however little chance there may be of a successful issue, it seems we ought to make an effort."[204] On the other hand, the question of asking for the surrender of a fugitive criminal from a state with which Britain had no treaty involved a principle of some importance, and it was felt, "if there is no extradition treaty with China, extradition is a bad word to use, and seems to invite a refusal."[205] The issue was thus debated for some time until a decision was forced on the Foreign Office by the eruption of the Su-pao case in Shanghai.[206] By August the British government decided that because they had recently refused to hand over the two journalists in the Su-pao case, it was altogether inopportune for the British Minister to make a representation to the Chinese government as Blake desired; the reply of the Chinese government to such an application at this juncture "would be unanswerable."[207] It was thus another case of colonial desires giving way to the wider commitments of the Foreign Office.

In the end, the Foreign Office agreed to Blake's demands that pressure be put on the Imperial government to cashier the Canton officials responsible, and pay the compensation to Yang's family,[208] although Lord Lansdowne, (1845-1927)

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[203] Blake to C.O. 19 June 1903 (confidential) ibid.

[204] Campbell Minutes on C.O. to F.O. 31 July, 1903, FO 17/1718.

[205] C.O. Minutes on Blake to C.O. 19 June, 1903, CO 129/317.

[206] See Chapter V.

[207] F.O. to C.O. 19 Aug. 1903, CO 129/321. Satow's views were found to be in entire harmony with the Foreign Office. Satow tel. of 21 Sept. 1903, FO 17/1718.

[208] C.O. to F.O. 26 Sept. 1903, ibid.

who had succeeded Lord Salisbury as Foreign Secretary in November, 1900, felt that "it will be difficult to get satisfaction, as the Chinese government probably quite approves of what was done, both as regards the murder and the reward of the murderer."[209] By this time, however, the former Acting Viceroy Te Shou had already died (on 5 January, 1904) and it would be difficult to prove to the present Viceroy the justice of a claim for compensation. Satow thus concluded that there was no point carrying on the case.[210] The Colonial Office also agreed that "It would be very much better not to prosecute than to prosecute and fail."[211] By this time, too, Sir Henry Blake had left the administration of the Colony, and his successor, Sir Matthew Nathan (1862-1939) also felt that no further steps should be taken against the Chinese government beyond suggesting to Satow that, if the opportunity should arise, he was to bring the facts of Yang's case to the notice of the central government, and warn that it should discourage any attempt of the Chinese provincial authorities to violate British territorial rights in the future.[212]

It can thus be seen that the revolutionary events of 1900-1903 had taxed the attitudes and policies of the British Colonial Office on a variety of difficult situations. It was not easy to maintain a consistency in reactions: on the one hand, the Colonial authorities had to abide by the guidelines indicated

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[209] Lansdowne Minutes on above, ibid.

[210] Satow to F.O., 10 May 1904, ibid.

[211] F.O. Minutes on above, ibid.

[212] Nathan to C.O. 17 Nov. 1904 (confidential) CO 129/324. There was even a feeling at the Colonial Office at this time that Yang was a notorious rebel anyway, and "he deserved his fate, and the only point to complain of was the violation of British territory. In the circumstances, I think that was almost excusable." C.O. Minutes, ibid.

by such men-on-the-spot as Sir Henry Blake, and on the other to appreciate the wider responsibilities with which the Foreign Office was usually burdened. Yet Sir Henry Blake had served his government well: through his great interest in the promotion of reform among the Chinese people of South China, he had supplied his chiefs with much intimate knowledge and understanding of local opinion which was not again experienced with his successors.

As for the revolutionaries, the Waichow rising had marked the end of the usefulness of the Hsing Chung Hui. After this date revolutionary events tended to move away from its bases in South China and spread wider into the mainland and out into South-east Asia. There was also no more talk of cooperation with the reformers. K'ang Yu-wei had strenuously disclaimed all connection with the revolutionaries: "His (Sun's) object and mine are as far apart as East from West."[213] Now the revolutionaries turned to a bigger and better organization in the T'ung Meng Hui, while the reformers saw some of their ideas incorporated in the reforms initiated by the Manchu throne.

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[213] K'ang Yu-wei to Blake, 1 Nov. 1900, in Blake to C.O. 12 March, 1901 (confidential) CO 129/304. See also the China Mail of 24 Oct. 1900, p. 3 col. 2; Times of 25 Oct. 1900, p. 5 col. 3, and Swettenham to F.O. 1 Nov. 1900, FO 17/1718.

CHAPTER V

STUDENT NATIONALISM AND THE T'UNG MENG HUI

The years between 1901 and 1905, culminating in the founding of the revolutionary T'ung Meng Hui in Japan, was a transitional period in the history of the Chinese revolution. The failure of the Waichow rising really marked the end of the Hsing Chung Hui as an active force and it is noteworthy that no new members were recruited to it after 1901.[1] Morale was low, and some of the most prominent among the early revolutionary leaders decided to abandon the cause altogether. Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai joined the staff of an English newspaper in Hong Kong and refused to have anything more to do with the movement.[2] Miyazaki Torazō the enthusiastic Japanese sympathiser also became disspirited by the events of 1900 and particularly the inability of the reformers and revolutionaries to cooperate. He retired from further revolutionary activities to write his autobiography, in which he felt he had made nothing of his life, only a "Thirty-three Years' Dream."[3] Sun Yat-sen and K'ang Yu-wei were both travelling abroad, away from the Chinese scene.

The situation was thus condusive to the emergence of a new force to keep alive the revolutionary movement, and the period saw the involvement of the student classes in anti-dynastic activities. It was paradoxical that the situation was largely brought into being by the Manchu dynasty itself, when

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[1] Feng Tzu-yu, "Hsing Chung Hui hui-yüan jen-ming shih-chi k'ao" in Lo Chia-lun (ed) Ko-ming Wen-hsien (Taiwan, 1953-6) III, 331-72.

[2] Tse Tsan-tai, The Chinese Republic, Secret History of the Revolution (Hong Kong, 1924) 23; Chou Lu, Chung-kuo Kuo-min-t'ang shih-k'ao (Shanghai, 1938) IV, 1229.

[3] Miyazaki Torazō, (Trans. Chung-kuo Yen-chiu She) San-shih-san nien lo-hua meng (Tokyo, 1943) 111; M. B. Jansen, The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen, (Cambridge, Mass. 1954) 112.

the government in September 1901 decided to initiate a programme of educational reforms, and encouraged the provincial authorities to send students abroad for study. All expenses were to be met by provincial funds.[4] As a logical consequence, Japan soon became the most popular "foreign" country to which students were sent. Japan was conveniently close to China, it was relatively inexpensive, and there was an affinity between the living conditions and customs of the two countries. In effect, Tokyo became the centre for a "short cut" course to European and American education and civilization.[5]

The number of Chinese students in Japan increased tremendously during 1902-1906,[6] and abuses in the system soon became apparent. Unscrupulous Japanese took advantage of the educational boom and set up schools of all sorts and descriptions; tuition and diplomas were freely bought and sold; the prices of food and other commodities rose in Tokyo; overcrowding in boarding houses led to ill feeling between Japanese hosts and Chinese students; worst of all many Chinese went to Japan merely for the name of being a returned student, and a large percentage stayed no more than a few months, to return home with only the merest smattering of Western knowledge acquired at best only second-

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[4] The edict of 17 September, 1901, is discussed in H. S. Galt, "Oriental and Occidental Elements in China's Modern Educational System" in The Chinese Social and Political Science Review, XII, (1928), 639-41; H. E. King, "The Educational System of China as recently reconstructed" in United States Bureau of Education Bulletin No. 15, (1911) 92-5; R. F. Hacket, "Chinese Students in Japan, 1900-1910" in Harvard University, Papers on China, III, (1949) 137-8; Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West (N. Carolina, 1966) 53-5.

[5] See H. S. Galt, op. cit. 627-8; V. K. Ting, "Chinese Students" in The Westminster Review, Vol. 169, (1908) 49-50; W. W. Yen, "Chinese Students in Japan" in East of Asia Magazine IV, (1905) 194-5; R. F. Hackett, op. cit. 138-9; Shu Hsin-ch'eng, Liu Hsüeh Shih, (Shanghai, 1927) 46-52; Kiang Wen-lan, The Chinese Student Movement (New York, 1948) 14-47.

[6] Reliable statistics are given in H. S. Galt, op. cit. 643-5; R. F. Hackett, op. cit. 141-2.

hand from Japanese instructors.[7] Yet these conditons produced in the overseas student the first stirrings of a national feeling, a sentiment which undoubtedly grew out of the need for self-protection and as a reaction against the difficulties of life in Japan. On the other hand, the wonders of Western civilization as manifest in the modern institutions of Japan were not lost on them and this prompted the growth of a sense of dissatisfaction with the indifference towards institutional reforms displayed by the Manchu government at home. The student abroad gradually came to the conviction that he had a purpose and a duty to perform towards his country, and influenced by the spirit of militarism which permeated the new learning, his thinking drew close to the radicalism promoted by the expelled reformers and revolutionaries who had found refuge in Japan.

It was therefore no surprise to find that the Chinese students in Japan increasingly interested themselves in the political questions of the day. They formed a vocal body of critics of the reigning dynasty in China. In the early years the students in Japan had no formal organization other than small provincial clubs composed of men from the same provinces. By 1903 however, all the groups had amalgamated into a proper Chinese Students' Union with headquarters in Tokyo; this was to become the social as well as political centre of student life in Japan. Membership increased and its activities included the publication of journals reflecting the new trends in political thought. The women students in Tokyo even organized themselves into a Red

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[7] The abuses in the system are discussed in P. Reinsch, Intellectual and Political Currents in the Far East, (Boston, 1911) 217; J. O. P. Bland, Recent Events and Present Policies in China (Philadelphia, 1912) 83-5; H. F. MacNair, The Chinese Abroad, (Shanghai, 1924) 242-5; T. F. Millard, The New Far East (New York, 1906) 263-4; V. K. Ting, op. cit. 50-2; J. M. Clinton, "Chinese Students in Japan" in Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal XL, 10, (1909) 570; M. T. Z. Tyau, "The hope of China's future" in Contemporary Review vol. 100, (1911) 825.

Cross Association in 1903.[8]

Even before then, however, the students in Japan had already involved themselves in political activities of one kind or another, albeit of a sporadic nature. In the winter of 1901, a rumour was circulated that the Manchu government was considering leasing Kwangtung province to France. The Cantonese students in Japan immediately organized a protest movement, the Kuang-tung Tu-li Hsieh-hui (Kwangtung Independence Association) led by Feng Tzu-yu, Cheng Kuang-kung and Li Tzu-chung.[9] This was followed by a movement initiated by Chang Ping-lin, a scholar-reformer who had joined the revolutionary camp after the failure of T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang's rising in 1900.[10] On 26 April 1902, Chang aimed to arouse student patriotism by organizing a meeting to mark the 242nd anniversary of the Manchu invasion of China,[11] and wrote a long and stirring manifesto for the occasion, which was widely circulated among the students in Japan. The Chinese Minister in Japan, Ts'ai Chün, intervened to ban the movement before the proposed meeting was held. In the end, a modified ceremony

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[8] See R. F. Hackett, op. cit. 144-6; the Times, 13 Aug. 1903, p. 2, col. 4-5; North China Herald 16 Mar. 1906, p. 569-70, leading article; W. W. Yen, op. cit. 195; See also Y. C. Wang, op. cit. 233-5, where he gives some reasons for the anti-Manchu sentiments of the students.

[9] Feng Tzu-yu, op. cit. I, 146, Hua-ch'iao ko-ming kai-kuo shih (Chung-king, 1946) 46; Hsüeh Chün-tu, Huang Hsing and the Chinese Revolution (Stanford, 1961) 35.

[10] Accounts of Chang are seen in Hsü Shou-shang, Chang Ping-lin (Chung-king, 1945); Shen T'ing-kuo, Chi Chang T'ai-yen hsien-sheng (Shanghai, 1946); T'ang Tsou-pei, Min-kuo ming-jen hsiao-ch'uan (Hong Kong, 1953) 20-2; Hsiao Kung-ch'üan, Chung-kuo Cheng-shih ssu-hsiang shih (Shanghai, 1946-8) II, 453-77; H. Boorman (ed) Biographical Dictionary of Republican China (New York, 1967-) I 92-8.

[11] It was on this day, 19th day of the 3rd lunar moon, that the last Ming Emperor hanged himself.

took place in Hong Kong, attended by revolutionary delegates from Canton and Macao.[12] A sequel to the incident was the widespread belief among the students that the Chinese Minister had secretly warned the Chinese government against sending students to Japan where revolutionary ideas were prevalent. Much excitement was generated among the student body, and though the Minister denied the allegation, relations between him and the Chinese community in his charge remained uneasy.[13]

This again gave rise to an unpleasant incident in August, 1902. When the Chinese Minister refused to endorse the application of some private students to a Japanese government military academy, a number of youths proceeded to the Legation, and a scuffle developed which eventually led to the deportation of the two student leaders Wu Chih-hui and Sun Su-fang from Japan.[14] On this occasion, both the Japanese press and the London Times came out on the side of the students, and it was felt that the Minister had acted unduly harshly. " ... It is therefore much to be regretted that a movement which is so promising should encounter any difficulties."[15] These sympathetic reactions served only to enhance the feelings of righteousness on the part of the overseas students, and were responsible, at least in part, for the increasing defiance with which

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[12] Feng Tzu-yu, op. cit. 46-7, Ko-ming i-shih I, 84; Lo Chia-lun (ed) Kuo-fu Sun Chung-shan hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'u-kao (Taipei, 1958) I, 109-10; Feng Tzu-yu, "Chang T'ai-yen yü Chih-na wang-kuo chih-nien-hui" in HHKM I, 497-502.

[13] See the Times of 9 Apr. 1902, p. 5, col. 2, and 30 Apr. 1902, p. 5 col. 2; R. F. Hackett, op. cit. 151-2.

[14] See Hackett, op. cit. 152; Chiang Wei-ch'iao, "Chung-kuo Chiao-yü-hui chih hui-i" in HHKM I, 485-6; also discussed in the Times 6 Aug. 1902, p. 3 col. 1, and 9 Aug. 1902, p. 5 col. 1.

[15] The Times, 6 Aug. 1902, p. 3 col. 1. See also Hackett, op. cit. 152.

they regarded the authorities.

These student activities, often impulsively perpetrated and by and large ineffectual, were undertaken with enthusiasm and what appeared to be a real sense of national consciousness. When subjected to the influences of revolutionary propaganda, these movements therefore became integral parts of the Chinese revolution. This was evident when the first graduates returned home to China, where for obvious reasons they chose to continue their rebellious activities from the confines of the International Settlement in Shanghai. By the beginning of the 20th century this Settlement had unwittingly developed characteristics which were favourable for the dissemination of radical political thought throughout the Central provinces of China. The Municipal Council which controlled the affairs of the residents, both Chinese and foreign, was largely dominated by merchants, of whom the majority was British. The Settlement had established its own judiciary, the Mixed Court, and it adhered to a policy of jealously guarding its toleration for the political convictions of its inhabitants, its freedom of speech and press, and the right of granting asylum to political refugees.[16] Shanghai thus displaced such earlier centres as Hong Kong and Singapore as a breeding ground for anti-Manchu activities, where the progressive student class found much sympathy for their talk of radical reform and received protection from the repressive moves on the part of the Chinese government. The students' aspirations were all the more appealing when they suggested that the Manchu rulers in their weakness, were ready to sacrifice China's prestige and integrity to the selfish purpose of retaining power in the Empire. To foreign observers, and the British in

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[16] These characteristics of the Shanghai Settlement are discussed in A. M. Kotenev, Shanghai, its Mixed Court and Council (Shanghai, 1925) 107; M. Elvin, "The Mixed Court of the International Settlement at Shanghai (until 1911)" in Harvard University, Papers on China XVII, (1963) 131-59.

particular, this was viewed as the real beginning of Chinese nationalism. " ... There is more in Young China than the Babu clerk and the missionary school student, and even these possess and exercise throughout the country an influence which is generally unappreciated ... for with reason certain recent manifestations of the existence of the Reform Party and of its patriotic sentiments have come as a surprise to many."[17] And again, " ... the youthful party, however they may be pooh-poohed by foreign wisecracks who don't understand them, ... are taken very seriously by their own people who do."[18]

Whatever may be said of the driving forces behind the student activities of this period, whether motivated by truly nationalistic sentiments or merely indulging in political agitation, the pattern of their protest movements in Japan was now repeated in Shanghai. In November, 1902, when the authorities of the Nan-yang Kung-hsüeh (Nan-yang Public School) forbade its students to engage in political discussions, a mass withdrawal from the school was staged, and this was followed by the establishment of the Ai-kuo Hsüeh-she (Patriotic School) by the students themselves in Shanghai.[19] Early in 1903, when a local rebellion in Kwangsi and the Yunnan-Kweichow areas, which had been raging for some time due to economic stress, became uncontrollable, a rumour was circulated that the Kwangsi Governor, Wang Chih-ch'un, was on the point of negotiating with the French government in Indo-China for the introduction of French troops

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[17] Times 13 Aug. 1903, p. 2 col. 4-5.

[18] North China Herald 25 Sept. 1903, p. 638 col. 1-3.

[19] Feng Tzu-yu, "Chung-kuo chiao-yü hui yü Ai-kuo hsüeh-she" in HHKM I, 481-2; Times 13 Aug. p. 2 col. 5.

and for a loan of French money to quell the rebellion.[20] The news caused a furore among the Cantonese student population, which saw in the Governor's action a threat to the independence of the two Kwang provinces. Accordingly a mass meeting was convened on 22 April, at a private park frequented by the Chinese (who were barred from public parks in the Foreign Settlement) known as Chang Su-ho's Gardens. It was decided that telegrams should be despatched to the government at Peking urging the removal of Wang from office. They expanded the incident into crisis proportions and talked of the dangers of a partition of the Chinese Empire itself. A telegram was also received from Tokyo announcing that all the Kwangtung and Kwangsi students there had already sent a telegram to the Wai-wu Pu at Peking, asking for the dismissal of Governor Wang.[21] The foreign community observed: "The earnest and grave demeanour of those who attended the meeting augurs well for the statement that the fires of patriotism and devotion to country still burn within the breasts of all serious-minded Chinese."[22]

A few days later there was another opportunity for student agitation, when Russian activities in Manchuria became recognised as a possible threat to the integrity of the Chinese Empire in the North. A public meeting was again held at Chang's Gardens in Shanghai on 27 April, 1903, and after stirring

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[20] The Governor had assumed office in June 1902, with a boastful declaration that he would be able to deal quickly and effectively with the rebellion. But by January 1903, he did not seem to have had much success, and the move to rally French assistance was creditable, though he made a point of denying the rumours. See the China Mail 20 Jan. 1903, p. 5 col. 4, and North China Herald 4 June 1903, p. 1096, col. 2-3. He was removed from office in July 1903, with the rebellion still in progress.

[21] Feng Tzu-yu, op. cit. 489; North China Herald 30 Apr. 1903, p. 8 col. 5; Times 13 Aug. 1903, p. 2 col. 4.

[22] North China Herald 30 Apr. 1903, p. 836 col. 2.

speeches by some leaders, telegrams were sent to the various Powers represented in China, urging their intervention to prevent Russia absorbing Manchuria. The British government, under the direction of Lord Lansdowne, would do no more than "simply acknowledge the receipt"[23] of the appeals from these self-appointed guardians of Chinese territorial integrity. From the students in Tokyo too, came energetic support for the movement. They formed themselves into the Chü-O I-yung Tui (Student Volunteer Corp to Resist the Russians) in May 1903, with a programme of daily military drill and strict regulations. The Chinese Minister in Japan quickly had the Association suppressed, and what had begun merely as a patriotic movement was now forced to be revolutionary. The result was the formation of a secret revolutionary military organization, the Chün-kuo-min Chiao-yü Hui (National Military Education Society) which managed to survive because of care in keeping knowledge of its existance from both the Chinese and Japanese authorities. The members received thorough military training, including the plotting of rebellions, terrorist activities and the use of propaganda. On graduation, they were sent home to China for practical experience.[24]

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[23] Lansdowne minutes on Mansfield to F.O. 30 Apr. 1903, FO 17/1608; For the most recent work on the Russian activities in Manchuria, see George A. Lensen, The Russo-Chinese War (Florida, 1967).

[24] Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih I, 155-7; E. P. Young, "Ch'en T'ien-hua, a Chinese nationalist," in Harvard University, Papers on China XIII, (1959) 115; Chiang Wei-ch'iao, op. cit. I, 162-66; Hsüeh Chün-tu, op. cit. 10-11; North China Herald 21 May 1903, p. 1019, col. 2; see also R. Scalapino and G. T. Yu, The Chinese Anarchist Movement (Berkeley, Calif. 1961) 2-35, for the origins of Chinese anarchism; R. Scalapino, "Prelude to Marxism: the Chinese Student Movement in Japan, 1900-1910" in A. Feuerwerker, et. al. (ed) Approaches to Modern Chinese History (California, 1967) 190-213.

One of the first to give dramatic expression to this growing militant-terrorist trend among the student nationalists was the Hunanese, Wan Fu-hua. In their search for a "cause" to which their immediate energies could be directed, the students seem to have concentrated their venom against the Kwangtung Governor Wang Chih-ch'un. His inability to suppress effectively the Kwangsi rebellion had placed him in a particularly vulnerable position. While the students repeatedly publicised his failings, Wang in retaliation made much of their allegedly seditious and revolutionary activities in Shanghai and Japan.[25] The climax came on 19 November, 1904 (Wang had already been dismissed from the governorship in July 1903) when Wan attempted to assassinate Wang Chih-ch'un in Shanghai. His shot missed its target, and Wan was instantly captured.[26] Wan's amateurish and badly-timed act was not insignificant: it marked the beginning of a change in the nature of student activities of this period, from the convocation of public meetings and sending of telegraphic appeals, to the actual perpetration of terrorist attempts against those Manchu dignitaries who tried to curb their radicalism. Their nationalism became increasingly tainted with violent anti-Manchu sentiments, and they became more and more identified with the militant faction of the revolutionary movement.

This development is best seen in the changing tones of the voluminous publications which emanated from the returned students at this time. The

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[25] North China Herald 4 June 1903, p. 1096 col. 2-3, and Times 9 July 1903, p. 5 col. 4.

[26] See Chou Lu, op. cit. III, 678-9; Hsüeh Chün-tu, op. cit. 23-4; North China Herald 25 Nov. 1904; Warren to Satow, 27 Feb. 1905 (confidential) in Satow to F.O. 9 Mar. 1905, FO 17/1671.
One interesting aspect in connection with this was the fact that Russia immediately saw in the assassination attempt the influence of Japanese intrigues, because Wan was a returned student from Japan, and the Russians accused the Japanese Consul at Shanghai of complicity in the plot. See F.O. to Satow, 9 Dec. 1904, FO 17/1635.

literature was mainly published in Tokyo and the Foreign Settlement in Shanghai, but was also distributed in many provinces in the interior of China. As their criticism of the reigning dynasty became more outspoken and daring, there were attempts, harsh but not necessarily effective, by the Chinese authorities to suppress this literary campaign. Libraries were confiscated, printing presses were closed, editors and public speakers were arrested and threatening proclamations were issued.[27] This eventually led to the eruption of the Su-pao case, in which the British authorities in the Shanghai Settlement were brought in direct contact with the student revolutionary movement.

The Su-pao (Kiangsu Journal) was a daily paper printed and published in the Foreign Settlement, with a circulation of about one thousand in 1903. It was started in 1896, had gradually become a reformist organ critical of the Manchu regime by 1902, and in June 1903, when Chang Shih-chao became its editor, was outspokenly revolutionary, advocating the expulsion of the Manchus and often libellously attacking the private lives of Manchu officials. It was clear that it survived so long only because of the special conditions of freedom and protection which existed in the Foreign Settlement, though even foreigners expected that prosecution of the radicals would not long be delayed. This came early in June, 1903. On the instructions of the Treaty Commissioner Lu Hai-huan, the governor of Soochow En-shou tried to issue proclamations for the arrest of a number of students for their public meetings, which were deemed of

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[27] Accounts of these are given in the Times of 6 June 1903, p. 7 col. 2; 1 July 1903, p. 7 col. 2; North China Herald 4 Jan. 1903, p. 1126 col. 1, and 11 June, 1903, p. 1157 col. 1; The Shanghai Branch to the General Committee, 8 June, 1903, in China Association Annual Report, 1903-1904; and the Ch'ing official records, "Su-pao ku-ch'ui ko-ming Ch'ing-fang tang-an" in HHKM I, 413; Mansfield to Townley, 10 July 1903, in Townley to FO, 30 July 1903 (confidential) FO 17/1599; J. Lust, "The Su-pao case: an episode in the early Chinese nationalist movement" in Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, XXVII, (1964) 413-4; Ko Kung-chen, op. cit. 152-4; Chang Ching-lu, op. cit. I, 77.

a libellous character. The Municipal Council however, refused to have the proclamations posted.[28] This attitude of the Council, which was more concerned with guarding its independence of action in the affairs of the Settlement than with cooperating with the Chinese government in weeding out its enemies, was to be seen again in the events that follow. Mainly because of this, it was difficult for the British government at home to formulate a definite policy with regard to the student agitation in the Settlement. Caught between the recalcitrance of the merchants who dominated the Municipal Council and the appeals for cooperation from the Chinese government, Britain's response to the Su-pao case was characterized by indecision and uncertainty.

Failing to obtain the desired arrests by proclamation, the Chinese government now resorted to legal action against the Su-pao writers in a bid to supress the student movement once and for all. This was unprecedented as the Chinese government had never in its history had cause to sue its subjects. In the end, mainly due to the part played by the British government in the proceedings, the Chinese authorities with great loss of prestige emerged more the victims than the victors of the contest.

On 26 June, the Shanghai taotai Yüan Shu-hsün approached the Consular Body with a warrant for the arrest of six Su-pao writers. He agreed to their trial in the Mixed Court with the customary foreign Assessor present, and also to any subsequent punishment meted out to be sustained in the Settlement. On this understanding a warrant was issued on 29 June for the arrest of Chang

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[28] En-shou's action was often interpreted as a move instigated by Wang Chih-ch'un to wreak vengeance on the critics of his poor handling of the Kwangsi rebellion, but the nature of the recent Su-pao articles would have warranted such a step anyway. See Chang Huang-chi, "Su-pao an shihlu" in HHKM I, 372; North China Herald 31 July 1903, p. 226 col. 1; Times 13 July 1903, p.5 col. 4, and 23 July p.5 col.4.

Ping-lin, Tsou Jung and four others. They were charged with various crimes of sedition, to which only Chang and Tsou pleaded guilty, and the hearing was fixed for 21 July.[29]

On the 20th however, came the first major set-back of the case. Wei Kuang-t'ao, the Nanking Viceroy, suddenly repudiated the agreement made between the taotai and the Consuls. He now demanded that the two who pleaded guilty should be handed over to the Chinese authorities for summary punishment.[30] The Consular Body, led by Britain's Sir Pelham Warren, (1845-1923) would not give way, and the whole matter was referred to the Diplomatic Corps at Peking. The dilemma which confronted the British government was at once apparent. While it was fully recognised that the articles of the Su-pao were outrageously seditious and often violent in tone, and while the French and Russian Ministers in Peking made it clear that they supported Viceroy Wei's demands, it was also equally evident that the Shangai Municipality was determined to abide by the rules of procedure in such cases under which, they contended, criminals could not be removed from the Settlement except after trial and conviction. This

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[29] For accounts of Tsou Jung, see Ch'en Hsü-lu, Tsou Jung yü Ch'en T'ien-hua ti ssu-hsiang (Shanghai 1957) 1-36; Tu Ch'eng-hsiang, Tsou Jung ch'uan (Taipei 1952); see also Townley to F.O. 30 July 1903 (confidential) FO 17/1599; North China Herald 3 July 1903, p. 10 col. 3, 17 July p. 162 col. 1; Times 13 July 1903, p. 5 col. 4.

[30] It was generally believed that Viceroy Wei was placed in an untenable position by pressure from the anti-Hunanese group in Peking, headed by Chang Chih-tung, who obviously bore a grudge against him when Wei was appointed Viceroy at Nanking instead of himself, and who would make much capital against him if he failed to have the Su-pao men beheaded. Wei was allegedly offering money in every direction to procure support for the Chinese claim for extradition: see Townley to Campbell, 13 Aug. 1903 (private) FO 17/1599; London and China Express 14 Aug. 1903, p. 634 col. 1-2; Townley to F.O. 21 Jan. 1903 (confidential) FO 17/1596; Times 23 July p. 5 col. 4.
A summary of Wei's character and capabilities is given in Townley to F.O. 20 Feb. 1903, (confidential) in FO 17/1596.

had been approved by the Diplomatic Body on 28 June, 1902.[31] Thus from the start Britain's attitude had to be one of compromise: "The main point is arranging any compromise to satisfy the Municipality who have the whole of the executive power in their hands, and to avoid the necessity of coercion."[32] This position was arrived at after Walter B. Townley (1863-1945), the British Chargé d'Affaires at Peking, suggested that surrendering the prisoners was bound to lead to considerable disorders at Shanghai, and it would probably necessitate the landing of an armed force to effect such a surrender.[33] The British authorities must also consider the fact that Chang and Tsou pleaded guilty at the preliminary hearing only under the belief that they would be tried and punished by the Mixed Court.[34]

The British share of the negotiations was now left in Townley's hands, and in this connection it is interesting to note some private expressions of his attitudes during this time. On one occasion he suspected that the French and Russian representatives at Peking went out of their way to oppose the

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[31] This principle is defended in the Times of 23 July 1903, p. 5 col. 4, which felt that the Su-pao defendants had become tools in a game, "in which the entire forces of conservative officialdom are consolidated to prevent the expression of public opinion on political questions." But there is reason to believe that the agreement was originally meant to apply only to judicial disputes between the French and International Settlements, and not to the Chinese government. See W. W. Willoughby, Foreign Rights and Interests in China (Baltimore 1927) I, 528; Kotenev, op. cit. 113-4. Even the Foreign Office was left in doubt regarding the validity of this argument: F.O. tel. Townley, 8 Aug. 1902, FO 17/1602.

[32] Langley minutes on Townley tel. F.O. 25 July 1903, FO 17/1603.

[33] Townley tel. F.O. 25 July 1903, ibid.
Townley was Secretary of the Legation in 1901, and because Chargé from 1902-3; he was then Councillor for a year. He had ambitions of succeeding Satow as Minister in 1906. See C. Pearl Morrison of Peking (Australia 1967) 143-4, 170.

[34] Townley tel. F.O. 28 July, ibid, and 30 July (confidential) FO 17/1599.

British position

> "pour embeter les Anglais for various reasons ... the French because of his deep-seated aversion to the Municipal Council that rules the International Settlement, and the Russian partly because he cannot help himself when an occasion offers but must let loose his anti-English sentiments, and partly because he likes to pose as the champion of the Ch'ing dynasty whilst he is busy dispossessing them of their ancestral homes ..."[35]

On another occasion Townley confessed that with all the information at his disposal he was convinced that the accused were not guilty "and can easily be proved so in a fair court ..."[36] With a sympathetic Townley in Peking, the intransigent Municipality in Shanghai, and loud pleas for fair play for the Su-pao men in the English press both in China and at home, it was not surprising that the situation was extremely delicate as far as London was concerned.

Lord Lansdowne was in two minds about the British stand: he felt that the Chinese government was not entitled to expect a change in judicial procedure since the practice of trial and punishment in the Mixed Court had existed so long without being challenged, (which did not seem to be a morally and legally justifiable view), and on the other hand, if the Chinese government agreed to letting Chang and Tsou withdraw their pleas of guilt (which in Chinese practices would lead to their immediate execution) and institute another fair hearing for them, he was not adverse to surrendering them, on condition that no torture would be used on them at any time.[37] Lansdowne turned to the Parliamentary Law Officers for consultation. Their conclusion,

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[35] Townley to Campbell, 30 July (private) ibid.

[36] Townley to Satow, 8 Aug. 1903, PRO 30/33, 7/9. Again stated in Townley to Campbell, 13 Aug. (private) FO 17/1599.

[37] F.O. to H. M. Attorney General and Solicitor General, 29 July, 1903, (immediate) FO 17/1619.

which came on 4 August, was to stand solidly behind the taotai's original agreement, and they urged the Foreign Office to refuse the delivery of the two prisoners.[38]

Just at this time, an incident occurred which served to strengthen the British position considerably, both in the government's conviction of having made a correct decision, and in proving the righteousness of that decision to the rest of the world. On 31 July, a journalist Shen Chin, who had taken part in the 1900 T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang uprising and who had subsequently returned to Peking to propagate revolution, was arrested and cruelly beaten to death by order of the Empress Dowager.[39] The event caused an uproar when news of it reached the outside world; from every side came condemnation of the methods of the Manchu government, and sympathy for the nationalist-reformist movement.[40] But more important still, there were widespread clamours that Britain should stand firm in her refusal to surrender the two Su-pao men. "It is presumable that a similar fate awaits the Shanghai reformers ... if they are handed over to Chinese justice."[41] "The affair has created an intense feeling among the foreign community and has aroused a strong sentiment against surrendering the Shanghai reformers to Chinese jurisdiction."[42] "It is such an outrage on all feelings of humanity that it seems desirable at the present

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[38] Report of Law Officers, 4 Aug. 1903, ibid.

[39] See Huang Chung-huang, "Shen Chin" in HHKM I, 284-307; and reprinted from Che-kiang Ch'ao, "Lun Shen Chin tsan-ssu shih" in HHKM I, 308-12.

[40] North China Herald 31 July 1903, p. 236 col. 3; Times 3 Aug. p. 3 col. 4, 7 Aug. p. 3 col. 6.

[41] Townley tel. F.O. 3 Aug. FO 17/1603.

[42] Times 3 Aug. p. 3 col. 4.

moment that the truth should be known ...."[43] And in the House of Commons some members wanted to know if after this incident the British consulate in Shanghai would not be instructed to refuse the surrender of Chang and Tsou.[44] The Reverend C. P. Sanderson also wrote" ... I beg leave to express the earnest hope that His Majesty will not permit the Reformers to be surrendered to the Chinese government. Every man in England will support them."[45]

At this point Lansdowne was forced to make an official announcement of British policy.[46] In a statement in the House of Commons he admitted that the Su-pao articles "were of a most violent and incendiary description." But,

> "two of the men pleaded guilty, and we consider that we are morally bound, in consequence of the circumstances under which that plea was taken, to insist that the pledge that was given by a Chinese official should be carried out .... We do not think the case is one in which the opinion of the Majority of the Consular Body ought necessarily to prevail."

This was significant, as Lansdowne was now committed to stand by his declaration even if Consular opinion of the other Powers, which was then in a state of considerable confusion, should come out in opposition; a stand the British government would perhaps not have taken had the Shen Chin case not helped to enhance their position.

There was certainly much difficulty in obtaining unanimous support for British policy from the other Powers at Shanghai and Peking. Townley reported that the Diplomatic Corps were so wearied by the disagreements that they

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[43] North China Herald 14 August p. 345, col. 1.

[44] Parliamentary Debates, 4 August 1903, vol. 126, pp. 1439-40.

[45] C. P. Sanderson to F.O. 6 Aug. 1903, FO 17/1619. Two days later he threatened, "Am rousing public attention re Chinese reformers", ibid.

[46] For the following quotations, see, Parliamentary Debates, 13 Aug 1903, Vol. 127 p. 1123-4; also given in translation in HHKM I, 383-4; similar instructions had been telegraphed to Townley, 5 Aug. FO 17/1602. See also Kotenev, op.cit. 109-13; London and China Express 7 Aug, p. 617 col. 1 leader, which supports the policy. "We are fully persuaded that the decision is indisputable from the point of view of human justice, and the success of the Reform movement ...."

contemplated returning the entire matter to the hands of the Consuls at Shanghai.[47] Acting Consul Mansfield in Shanghai reported that only three or four of the Consuls could be expected to vote with him in favour of maintaining the agreement with the Taotai.[48] From the Chinese side came a reminder through the Legation in London that it was a purely Chinese case involving Chinese journalists on the one side and the Chinese government on the other, and that Britain "had no locus standi in the matter."[49] To further increase pressure on Britain the Viceroy at Nanking now made it known that he would denounce the Taotai and cause him to lose his head if the prisoners were not surrendered. soon.[50] Matters had thus reached a deadlock. The Foreign Office decided that the easiest way out was to approach the French government, so far the strongest opponent of British policy,[51] and hope to persuade them to change their minds.[52] Meanwhile, Lansdowne suggested privately to Townley that should there be any danger to the prisoners, Britain was ready to arrange for them to escape to Hong Kong, and also if trouble should arise in Shanghai, the Admiral was to send up a gun boat.[53] To such ill-advised schemes was the British government

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[47]Townley tel. F.O. 8 Aug. FO 17/1603. Lansdowne found this suggestion completely inadmissable, and demanded "What reason is there for supposing that a majority of the Consular Body at Shanghai have the right of overruling the Council or giving them orders?" It was clear that by now Lansdowne was fully committed to standing by the Council's decision. See F.O. tel. Townley, 8 Aug, FO 17/1602.

[48]Townley tel. 13 Aug FO 17/1603.

[49]Chinese Minister's interview with Lansdowne, in F.O. to townely, 12 Aug FO 17/1595.

[50]Townely tel. F.O. 13 Aug. 17/1603. Townley and his colleagues considered this as the "last card" from the Chinese authorities, and at least the Taotai "is worth all the other vauriens put together." See Townley to Campbell, 13 Aug. 1903, (private) FO 17/1599.

[51]The French Minister at Peking, Dubail, was a former Shanghai Consul General who entertained a deep-seated aversion to the Municipal Council, and who therefore saw in the non-surrender of the prisoners a victory for the Council at the expense of the Consuls. See Townley's privatenote attached to his telegram of 13 Aug. 1903, FO 17/1603.

[52]Campbell minutes on the above, ibid.

[53]Private clause in F.O. tel. Townley, 12 Aug. 1903, FO 17/1602.

prepared to resort in their determination to prevent the Chinese government from prosecuting two leading revolutionaries. Fortunately Townley was more realistic than the government at home, and warned that "Escape of prisoners would cause great outcry."[54]

Just at this critical juncture, Sir Ernest Satow passed through Shanghai on his way to resume his administration in Peking. The Shanghai Taotai seized the opportunity of approaching him personally with a new plan to resolve the difficulty: namely that a Chinese official holding wide judicial powers, say, the Shanghai magistrate, should sit with the Mixed Court magistrate to try the case along the lines of his earlier agreement, provided that neither perpetual imprisonment nor the death penalty be imposed.[55] This was probably the Taotai's snatching at any straw to save himself, but it did offer a basis for more hopeful negotiations. The plan was regarded "very satisfactory" by the Foreign Office,[56] and by 16 August the French government had succumbed to the combined pressure of London and Satow in Peking.[57] Viceroy Wei now remained the only intransigent party.[58] On 30 August, he again demanded from the Consular Body the unconditional surrender of the prisoners. This was refused, and the Consuls retaliated by threatening to release the prisoners, who could not be detained in custody indefinitely, unless the Viceroy would agree

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[54]Townley tel. F.O. 13 August FO 17/1603.

[55]Telegram from Shanghai, in Townley tel. F.O. 16 August ibid Satow to Lansdowne, 10 Sept. 1903 (Private) FO 800/119.

[56]Lansdowne minutes on Townley's telegram of 16 Aug. FO 17/1603.

[57]Satow to F.O. 19 Sept. 1903 (very conf.) FO 17/1600; Satow to Lansdowne, 24 Sept. (private) FO 800/119.

[58]Prince Ch'ing had promised Satow to telegraph the Viceroy with regard to the Taotai's new proposal, but the promise did not seem to have been carried out. See Satow to F.O. 19 Sept. 1903, (very conf.) FO 17/1600, and telegram of 14 Oct. FO 17/1603.

immediately to the Taotai's plan.[59] This was as near blackmail as diplomacy could go, and yet it was endorsed heartily both by the British Foreign Office and the London Times.60

It was clearly time for the Chinese government to climb down. On 18 November, Wei Kuang-t'ao agreed to the trial of the Su-pao men in the Mixed Court and to appointing an officer to sit with the Magistrate.[61] The trial finally ended on 7 December, with four of the accused acquitted, and Chang and Tsou, because of their admission of guilt, sentenced to life imprisonment.[62] The British Assessor B. Giles protested that this was too heavy a penalty. Two or three years imprisonment, he thought, would have been sufficient. The verdict was thus declared null and void.[63] The British Consul-General at Shanghai, Sir Pelham Warren, tried at first to persuade Wei to reduce the sentences, arguing that it was far more dignified for the Chinese government to treat the prisoners as "misguided fools whose utterances could not injure the government."[64]

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[59] Satow tel. F.O. 14 Oct. ibid, and Goodnow to Wei, 31 Oct. 1903, in Satow to F.O. 16 Nov. FO 17/1601.

[60] See Lansdowne, Campbell and Langley minutes on Satow's telegram of 14 Oct. FO 17/1603; the Times 7 Nov. 1903, p. 7, col. 4.

[61] Warren tel. F.O. 18 Nov. 1903, FO 17/1608.

[62] Accounts of the trial are given in the Times 7 Dec. 1903, p. 5 col. 5; 17 Dec. p. 5 col. 3; North China Herald 11 Dec. 1903; Satow to F.O. 17 Dec. FO 17/1601; Chang Huang-chi, "Su-pao an shih-lu" in HHKM I, 384-5; Chang Ping-lin, "Yü Wu Chih-hui t'an Su-pao an shü in HHKM I, 398-400.

[63] Giles, to Warren, 8 Dec. 1903, in Satow to F.O. 17 Dec. ibid; Satow to Lansdowne, 17 Dec (Private) FO 800/119.
For the second time, the British position in this case had no legal basis, as it was again by virtue of practice rather than written agreement that the Assessor's concurrence was deemed necessary to cases in which only Chinese subjects were concerned. Even Satow admitted this, see Satow to F.O. 27 Jan. 1904, FO 17/1637.

[64] Satow tel. F.O. 27 Jan 1904, FO 17/1641. On his part, Satow also tried to persuade Prince Ch'ing. See Satow to F.O. 11 Dec. 1904, FO 17/1636.

When Wei still refused, the Consular Body resorted again to the tested expedient of threats; if a satisfactory judgment was not delivered by 26 May, the prisoners would be released.[65]

The Chinese government, having captured and tried the anti-dynastic journalists, now had to eat its own words and drastically reduce the punishments set out for them. On 20 May new sentences were pronounced: three year's imprisonment for Chang and two for Tsou, both with hard labour; and to date from the day of arrest. On release both were to be banished from the Foreign Settlement.[66] The case was thus concluded to the satisfaction mainly of the British government, and Sir Walter Langley at the Foreign Office justified its strong-arm tactics by the observation: "The Consular Body evidently considered that the case had dragged on long enough and made use of an argument which the Chinese government could understand ...."[67]

Having wrested the Su-pao defendants from Chinese custody, the British government soon recognised the difficulty of disposing of them when they have served their sentences. Warren was of the opinion that the easiest plan was to transfer them by a British steamer to Hong Kong, where he felt they would be safe.[68] It needed little observation to realize that Hong Kong would in fact have been the least suitable place to deposit the two journalists much wanted by the Chinese government; this was pointed out by the Hong Kong Governor, Sir Matthew Nathan (1861-1939):[69]

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[65] Satow to F.O. 23 Mar 1904, FO 17/1636.

[66] Satow tel. F.O. 23 May 1904, FO 17/1641.

[67] Langley minutes on Satow's of 31 May 1904, FO 17/1637.

[68] Warren to Satow, 7 June 1904, in Satow to F.O. 14 June, 1904, ibid.

[69] Nathan to Chamberlain, 29 Sept. 1904, in C.O. to F.O. 10 Nov. 1904, FO 17/1657.
Sir Matthew Nathan became Governor of Hong Kong in July 1904, and the reputation of his energetic and progressive administration in the Gold Coast preceded him. He proved a popular governor, and in 1907 was transferred to Natal. See accounts of him in the London and China Express, 1 July 1904, and China Mail, 19 July 1904, in both leading articles.

> " .... Apart from the fact that the experience of the past shows that such persons would not be safe here without some measure of police protection entailing expense upon the government, it appears to me their presence at Hong Kong would certainly be misconstrued by the Chinese authorities in the neighbouring provinces of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, and would tend to impair those harmonious relations which it is clearly to the interests of the Colony to maintain.
>
> Hong Kong lies too close to Canton, seat of the government of the two provinces referred to, and is too intimately connected with it, commercially and by the daily flow of human intercourse, to be used without risk of grave complications as a place of residence of men whose avowed object is to alter the existing form of government in China, and whose residence at Hong Kong would give them special facilities for working towards that end."

Nathan suggested that the Foreign Office should try the Straits Settlements.[70] When consulted, Sir John Anderson, Governor of the Straits, made it clear that he would reluctantly accept the two men only if the British government "have no means of disposing of them ... provided all the expenses of their maintenance, and watching and safe-guarding them are borne by His Majesty's Government and no expense is thrown on the Straits Settlements."[71] The Foreign Office was thus left to resolve their dilemma without much hope of cooperation from the Colonial authorities. The Colonial Office attitude was clear: "The tranquility of the Chinese in the Straits Settlements and Hong Kong is of more importance than the lives of two so-called reformers. As a matter of fact, they would stand a very good chance of being assassinated in Singapore as K'ang Yu-wei nearly was ...."[72] The Foreign Office admitted, "This is rather awkward,"[73] while fully recognising that the two men must be disposed of somewhere else other than in China. Finally the situation resolved itself:

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[70] Nathan to Chamberlain, ibid.

[71] Anderson to Lyttelton, 29 Dec. 1904 (conf) in C.O. to F.O. 27 Jan. 1905, FO 17/1686.

[72] Just Minutes on F.O. to C.O. 23 Nov. 1904, FO 17/1657.

[73] Langley minutes on C.O. to F.O. 10 Nov. 1904, ibid.

Tsou Jung died in prison on 3 April, 1905,[74] and Chang Ping-lin on his release on 29 June, 1906, was taken by revolutionary comrades to Japan.[75]

It was undoubtedly true that the Su-pao case involved much more than a story of trial and judgment. The Chinese government in apprehending the Su-pao journalists sought to make an example of them and curb the growth of a form of student nationalism which was becoming increasingly a threat to the dynasty; yet in its efforts to bring this about it ran counter to the imperialistic tendecies of the Shanghai foreign authorities, and in the end brought only humiliation upon itself. On the other hand, the Municipality and the Consular Body of Shanghai took the line they did, less out of moral or legal convictions, than a desire to reassert their right of independent actions vis-a-vis the Settlement. And because the Municipal Council was British-dominated, the outcome of the case made Britain appear to be not only a sympathiser, but in the eyes of some, an outright supporter of the revolutionary movement. Both consequences were unfortunate.

The difficulties of the Chinese case was of course complicated by the undercurrents of rivalry between such men as Chang Chih-tung and the Nanking Viceroy Wei Kuang-t'ao, so that the Su-pao defendants sometimes appeared to be merely pawns in a political game between conservatism and progress.[76] Yet there were also marked failings on the part of some British observers, including the Acting Consul-General at Shanghai, to understand fully the implications of the seditious articles published in the Su-pao. Mansfield regarded them as "mere childish ravings of ill-balanced and ignorant minds.... their authors I believe would be the last people to take any active part in carrying out the doctrines they preach ...."[77] This was echoed by the

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[74]Chou Lu, op.cit. IV, 1241 relates that there had been some suspicion that Tsou was poisoned by Manchu agents, but in Hsueh Chun-tu, op.cit. 39, no proof could be found by the committee set up by Huang Hsing in mid-April to investigate the cause of Tsou's death. See also Feng Tzu-yu, op.cit. I, 83-4; Ching Mei-chiu, "Tsui An" in HHKM II, 246.

[75]Satow to F.O. 9 Mar. 1905, FO 17/1636; Chang Huang-ch'i, op.cit. in HHKM I, 384-5.

[76]North China Herald 31 July 1903, p. 225 col. 1 See also Townley to Campbell, 13 Aug. (private) FO 17/1599 Times 23 July 1903, p. 5 col. 4.

[77]Mansfield to Townley, 10 July 1903, in Townley to F.O. 30 July (conf) ibid.

North China Herald: "Their childish vapourings would be sufficient proof of their insignificance to any government less ignorant than that which rules at Peking ...."[78] The general conclusion was that "the Chinese government has displayed an amount of energy not to say vindictiveness worthy of a better cause."[79] These impressions were mistaken, of course. Both Tsou and Chang were highly influential among intellectual circles in China and abroad. Tsou Jung was the author of the widely-read tract Ko-ming Chün (Revolutionary Army) which was "probably the most violent and outspoken attack on the Manchus ever written by a Chinese."[80] Chang Ping-lin was a scholar of considerable renown and became editor of the revolutionary Min-pao (People's Journal) in 1906.

Leaving aside the issue of moral justification, one important development of the whole Su-pao proceedings was to encourage rather than muzzle the growth of revolutionary sentiment throughout the Yangtze area, after this manifestation of the weakness of the Manchu dynasty in its failure to prosecute the Su-pao writers. Student criticism of the regime became bolder both in the press and on the platform, and soon even the promise of constitutional reforms from the government failed to satisfy their radical aspirations.

It is a singular feature of Chinese history that at the time when the Manchu dynasty finally decided to offset the charges of lethargy and conservatism against it by launching epoch-making constitutional reforms, the anti-Manchu movement also reached a landmark on its organizational front in the founding

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[78] North China Herald 31 July 1903, p. 226 col. 1.

[79] London and China Express, 14 Aug. 1903, p. 634, col. 1.

[80] Hsüeh Chün-tu, op.cit. 14; The text of the Ko-ming Chun can be found in Chou Lu, op.cit. II, 419-35. A translation by J. Lust is forthcoming.

of the T'ung Meng Hui (Alliance Society, or United League). This came about mainly through the initiative of Sun Yat-sen, who saw that the extension of revolutionary activities had resulted in the mushrooming of small anti-dynastic societies in China and abroad. Some of these included the Hua Hsing Hui (Society for the Resurrection of China) formed by Huang Hsing in Hunan, 1903; the Jih Chih Hui (Society of Daily Knowledge) in Hupeh, 1904; and the Erh-shih Shih-chi chih Chih-na (China in the 20th Century Society) in Japan, 1905.[81] At the same time, the original Hsing Chung Hui had begun to decline in affectiveness owing to the repeated failures of its uprisings and the financial difficulties that ensued. It was felt by Sun that a revolutionary league to unite the activities of all these different societies was necessary to direct future movements.

In the winter of 1904, Sun Yat-sen was invited to visit Bruseels by two Hunanese overseas students, Chu Ho-chung and Ho Tzu-ts'ai. They arranged meetings for Sun with other Chinese students in Brussels, who all displayed enthusiasm for the revolutionary programme Sun preached. At the end of his visit, Sun suggested that an oath of allegiance be taken from all those present, as means of ensuring fraternity and unity. From Brussels Sun then travelled to Berlin and Paris, where similar alliances were made with Chinese student groups, and the same oath was taken. This was the beginning of the T'ung Meng Hui, and Brussels was to remain its European Headquarters.[82]

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[81] For Accounts of these societies, See Chou Lu, op.cit. IV, 1448; Feng Tzu-yu, "Kuang Fu Hui" in HHKM I, 515-9; Chang Nan-hsien, "Jih-chih Hui shih-mo" ibid I, 555-71; Chang Kuo-kan, Hsin-hai Ko-ming shih-liao (Shanghai 1958) 1-16; J. Fass, "Revolutionary Activity in the province of Hupeh" in Anchiv Orientalni XXVIII (1960), 128-9.

[82] Lo Chia-lun (ed) Kuo-fu Sun Chung-shan hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'u-kao I, 140-4; Chu Ho-chung, "Ou-chou T'ung Meng Hui chi-shih" in Lo Chia-lun (ed) Ko-ming Wen-hsien II, 254-60; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming I-shih, II, 132-41.

In July 1905 Sun Yat-sen returned to Japan, welcomed by hundreds of students at Yokohama. On 28 July he was introduced to Huang Hsing, and the two agreed to amalgamate their followers to form a new revolutionary organization. A conference was accordingly held on 30 July in Tokyo, at which leading members of the Hua Hsing Hui and Hsing Chung Hui were present. They chose the name Chung-kuo Ko-ming T'ung-meng Hui for the new organization, (generally known as T'ung Meng Hui.)[83] The party programme was determined, oaths of allegiance were taken (similar to that used by Sun in Europe) and a set of regulations was drawn up. The formal founding of the Society was proclaimed on 20 August, 1905.[84] A mass meeting was held on that day, at which representatives from seventeen of the eighteen provinces attended, as well as number of Japanese sympathisers. Elections were held, and Sun Yat-sen was unanimously made President of the Society. Huang Hsing was elected Deputy, and some Japanese, including Miyazaki Torazō, were accepted as members. It was decided that branches of the League were to be established in China and abroad.[85]

Thus was formed the T'ung Meng Hui which would coordinate the activities of all the Chinese revolutionaries inside and outside of China and sustain their efforts until the final success in 1911. In its organization and discipline, the T'ung Meng Hui surpassed all previous revolutionary societies, and its membership, ranging from students to business men, militarists

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[83] Japanese influence on the Chinese revolutionary society was evident, as the characters T'ung Meng Hui had been the Chinese name of the Japanese society Kokumin Domeikai, established in September, 1900, to resist the Russian threat in Northern Asia. See M. B. Jansen, op.cit. 107-10; Liu K'un-i, Liu K'un-i i'chi (Peking 1959) V, 2284-5.

[84] There appears to be some confusion regarding this date, but see Teng Mu-han, "Chung-kuo T'ung Meng Hui ch'eng-li shih-jeh k'ao" in ko-ming Wen-hsien II, 246-7.

[85] Feng Tzu-yu, "Chi Chung-kuo T'ung Meng Hui," in Ko-ming Wen-hsien II, 148; Ko-ming Wen-hsien II, 158-217 gives a complete list of T'ung Meng Hui members, and II, 238-242 gives the set of regulations. See also Hsü Yung-ying, "Dimensions of China's Unity" in Pacific Affairs, XV, 3 (1942) 302-3 in which an interesting comparison is made between the basic planks formulated by Sun Yat-sen for the T'ung Meng Hui and those of Chu Yüan-chang, the founder of the Ming dynasty. This, the author suggests, proves that Chinese nationalism had its roots in China's own past, and was influenced only superficially by the impact of the West.

to secret society agents, increased tremendously in the first few years of its existence.[86] An official organ for propaganda was soon set up, at first by taking over the Erh-shih shih-chi chih Chih-na magazine which had already been operated in Japan. When this was banned by the Japanese government, late in August, the T'ung Meng Hui set up its own journal, the Min Pao (Peoples' Journal) the first issue of which appeared on 26 November, 1905. This was a highly successful periodical, and included among its editorial staff such brilliant writers as Hu Han-min, Wang Ching-wei, and Chang Ping-lin after his release from prison in 1906.[87]

As the revolutionary movement progressed, the general agitation in the Empire was not lost on the Manchu rulers. As early as 1901, when the Court was still in Sian-fu, their refuge during the Boxer troubles, the Empress-Dowager had already decided that some measure of institutional reform along Western lines was necessary, if only to pacify the more radical among her critics. In a remarkable edict of 29 January 1901, she condemned the existing system of government, the corruption among the officials, and commanded the Viceroys, Governors, and other high officials to submit opinions as to how the Empire's administration might be improved.[88] It was an unusual admission of incompetence, yet the edict did not seem to evoke much response. Even the London Times

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[86] T'ang Leang-li, Inner History of the Chinese Revolution (London 1930) 49-53 gives detailed accounts of the T'ung Meng Hui organization, composition and financial system. The Society is also discussed in North China Herald of 1 Dec. 1905, 474 col. 1-3, and in Jordan to F.O. 7 Jan. 1907, (very conf.) in FO 371/223.

[87] For the Min Pao, see Man Hau, "T'ung Meng Hui shih-tai Min Pao shih-mo chi" in Ko-ming Wen-hsien II, 218-38; Hu Han-min, "Min Pao chih lu-ta chu-i" in HHKM II, 261-70; and an account in the North China Herald of 19 Jan 1906, 126-7.

[88] The edict is discussed in S. Chu, Reformer in Modern China, Chang Chien (New York, 1965) 59; the Times of 7 Feb. 1901, p. 5 col. 1-2, and 14 Feb. p. 5 col. 4.

observed that having regard to the previous promises of reform from the Court, the main object of the present utternace was "to throw dust in foreign eyes".[89] It was not until 1905, when a commission of five high officials was appointed to travel abroad for the specific purpose of learning about constitutional government, that the Manchu attempt at constitutional reform was taken seriously.

On 7 July, 1905, the Commissioners were appointed, under the leadership of Duke Tsai-tse. Many motives have been attributed to the Empress-Dowager for this progressive move. At least as a matter of expediency, it was a genuine attempt at modernization, especially after the example set by Japan when as a modernized state, she defeated the autocratic Russian Empire in the 1904-5 war.[90] As for British reactions, Sir Ernest Satow in Peking was impressed by Na T'ung's assurance that the Commission was but the first step to a series of projected investigations of the political systems of the West, and that it was considered "the germ of a constitution" for China.[91] When Satow learned that a visit to England was on the itinery of the Commissioners, he did not hesitate to suggest that it was worthwhile showing them "some attention" as he considered the move "a sign that China is waking up."[92] The Commissioners would have thus started off in an atmosphere of optimism and goodwill, but for an unfortunate incident.

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[89] Times 7 Feb. 1901, p. 5 col. 2.

[90] The Japanese press generally welcomed the project as herald of an era of reform in China. See the Times 22 July 1905, p. 5 col. 4. Other analyses of the Empress-Dowager's motives are seen in J. R. Levenson, Confucian China and its Modern Fate (London 1958-65) II, 7-10; W. Levi, Modern China's Foreign Policy (Minneapolis 1953) 92-3; E-tu Zen Sun, "The Chinese Constitutional Mission of 1905-1906" in Journal of Modern History XXIV, 3, (1952) 251-2; Huang Kung-chieh and Wu Ching-hsiang, Chung-kuo Cheng-hsien Shih (Shanghai 1937) I, 10-1; Ts'ang Fu "Li-hsien yün-tung chih chin-hsing" in HHKM IV, 3-9.

[91] Satow to F.O. 26 July 1905 (conf.) FO 17/1672. The London and China Express of 6 April 1906, p. 264 col. 1-2 also expressed optimism.

[92] Satow to Lansdowne 10 Aug. 1905 (private) FO 800/120.

On 24 September, 1905, as the party was about to board a train in Peking on their journey abroad, a crudely-devised bomb was thrown at the Commissioners by an impulsive young revolutionary, Wu Yüeh. Two of the Commissioners were slightly injured, but Wu himself was instantly killed.[93] His only immediate achievement was to postpone the departure of the Commissioners till December. Yet Wu's attempt was yet another manifestation of the growing terrorist tendencies among the student radicals. It also served to cause considerable confusion both among the Chinese officials and foreign government representatives at Peking as to Wu's motive, since it was generally recognised that the Court's constitutional reform programme was meant chiefly to placate the young radicals in the country. There was speculation that the deed was perpetrated by the conservatives who were against innovations; by the anti-dynastic followers of Sun Yat-sen; or by anti-foreign officials who resisted the need to learn from the West.[94] In one respect, however, Wu's martyrdom was not perhaps entirely in vain. The bomb incident revealed the cowardice and disorganization among the Chinese officials and guards in Peking, which indirectly furthered the revolutionary cause, in morale at least. There were accounts of the Chinese officials who "showed the white feather ... and the guard of honour took to flight - the crowd of Chinese officials on the platform disappeared like magic."[95] A description of the aftermath reads:[96]

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[93]For accounts of Wu Yüeh and his assassination attempt, see "Lieh-shih Wu-Yüeh chün i-chien shu" in HHKM II, 432-7. The North China Herald of 3 Nov. 1905 p. 286 col. 1-3 translates an article in a contemporary Hankow native newspaper, which eulogized Wu as a man of wisdom, sagacity, and courage, and concluded that he did the country a service by eliminating (sic) the five Commissioners at the start, as they would not have been able to achieve anything anyway. See also Satow to F.O. 5 Oct. 1905, FO 17/1673, and his diary entry for 24 Sept. 1905, PRO 30/33, 16/8

[94]Conflicting analyses of the situation can be seen in North China Herald 29 Sept. 1905, p. 705 col. 2-3, p. 733, col. 2; London and China Express 29 Sept. p. 758, col. 1, leading article. Satow to F.O. 5 Oct, ibid, and Satow to Lansdowne, 5 Oct (private) FO 800/120.

[95]Satow to Lansdowne, ibid.

[96]From a private letter reprinted in North China Herald 6 Oct. 1905, p.25 col.3.

> "... there seems to be a regular panic in Peking, and the wildest reports are accepted as true by the more timid and credulous ... The fear of reprisals seems to have pervaded the atmosphere of Peking during the last few days, so that everyone is on the qui vive and panic lurks alike within the Imperial Palaces as inside the more unpretentious dwelling places of the various Ministers of State and subordinate members of the great Boards."

Yüan Shih-k'ai for one attached much importance to the incident, and went so far as to request the cooperation of the Hong Kong government for assistance in tracing the men responsible for the outrage.[97] Much was also read into the sudden return of the Court from the Summer Palace in October, three weeks in advance of the arranged date. "They are all thoroughly frightened," reported Satow.[98]

After this brief interlude, the Commissioners finally left on 11 December, with replacements for the two injured envoys. The mission travelled in two groups, one visiting Japan, England, France and Belgium, and the other the United States and the German Empire. On their return in July and August of 1906, a number of Imperial decrees were promulgated upon their recommendations for practical steps to be taken in the reform of the government. On 26 August, Prince Ch'un, brother of the Emperor, was ordered to head a committee for the examination of the Commissioners' memorials. On 1 and 2 September, edicts promised the eventual adoption of constitutional government as well as the appointment of officials for supervising the reorganization of the government machinery. On 13 August 1907, a Bureau for Constitutional Planning was established.[99]

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[97] Nathan to Satow, 1 Oct. 1905 (private) PRO 30/33 9/17.

[98] Satow to Lansdowne, 19 Oct. (private) FO 800/120. See also Satow tel. F.O. 9 Oct (secret) in FO 17/1675.

[99] These measures are discussed in E-tu Zen Sun, op.cit. 265-6; Chang Peng-yüan Liang Ch'i-ch'ao yü, Ch'ing-chi ko-ming (Taiwan, 1964) 183-4; S. Chu, op.cit. 64; Ts'ang Fu, op.cit. in HHKM IV, 5-6; and "Li-hsien chih-wen" ibid. 17-20.

News of these progressive measures was received with approval from the foreign press,[100] and Sir John Jordan, (1852-1925) the new British Minister in Peking, reported that the edicts were welcomed throughout the country and celebrations were held by the officials, the gentry and the people at large.[101]

Yet before long, as the novelty of the Imperial pronouncements wore off, and the immediate results turned out to be a mere reshuffling of government ministries, the superficiality of the Manchu constitutional movement was recognised. For one thing, the now famed Commissioners in their hurried journey could only have grasped the faintest impression of all the new technical appliances and political institutions paraded before their eyes. It dawned upon intelligent observers that perhaps China, unlike Japan, was not quite ready for constitutional government in the form it was proposed to adopt. Only a

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[100] Times 3 Sept. 1906, p. 7 col. 2-3 leading article; London and China Express 7 Sept. 1906 p. 675-6. The Times of 15 Sept. p. 5 col. 2 gives an account of the 14 members of the deliberative committee, and hopefully suggests that although mostly of the conservative clique, they were sure to recognise the signs of the times and concede much in principle.

[101] Jordan to F.O. 21 Feb. 1908, FO 371/425.
Jordan had joined the China Consular Service in 1876 as a student interpreter in Peking, and by the time he became Minister in September 1906, he had acquired deep knowledge of all things Chinese, and his appointment was viewed from all sides with unqualified satisfaction. He soon fulfilled all the expectations made of him. The North China Herald of 4 Jan. 1907 p. 29 col. 2 commented: "With an intimate knowledge of China and her affairs, he combines a broad-minded and sympathetic grasp of British interests in the Far East in all their variety and ramifications ..." Arnold Robertson of the Peking Legation in a letter (private) to the Foreign Office, FO 371/233: "I hope it is fully realized at home what a splendid Minister we have here. He is worth the whole of the rest of his colleagues put together, and is universally liked and respected. It is a genuine pleasure to work under him." Other testimonials to Jordan's popularity and efficiency can be seen in P. Reinsch, An American Diplomat in China (London 1922) p. 51, C. A. Middleton-Smith, The British in China (London 1920) p. 88-9; C. Pearl, Morrison of Peking (Australia 1967) 192. See also Lau Kit-ching, "Sir John Jordan and the Affairs in China, 1906-1916, with special reference to the 1911 Revolution and Yüan Shih-k'ai," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1967.

small percentage of the population knew what a constitution was, and until the official mentality could be reformed, no thorough-going changes would be possible. As the North China Herald pointed out, there could be detected in China three groups interested in the constitutional movement: the intelligent and genuine reformers, those who were using the reform cry for their own personal ends, and the majority of the country who had little appreciation of the word "reform"[102] In a final review, the conclusion was increasingly apparent as the government soon reverted to its old reactionary ways,[103] that constitutional government as advocated by the Ch'ing dynasty was meant to attain goals other than those of genuine political reform: to ward off revolutionary tendencies, divert the attention of the radicals, to centralize the Manchu hold over the country, and perhaps to impress the outside world that the dynasty was able to reorganize its own house when it so desired. These impressions were soon obvious to the Britons interested in the affairs of China, and the initial enthusiasm for the Manchu "awakening" soon gave way to scepticism and disappointment. The British government was warned to tread cautiously and not take too much to heart the promises of the Manchu Court, nor to apply to China the analogy of Japan and her modernization movement.[104] When Sir John Jordan recounted the insignificant reforms so far undertaken as a result of the constitutional programme, the Foreign Office was forced to observe: "If no more than this is to come out

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[102] North China Herald 21 Sept. 1906, p. 673-4, leading article. Other discussions are found in "li-hsien chi-wen" in HHKM IV, 13-7; W. Levi, op.cit. 93-4; E-tu Zen Sun, op.cit. 265-7; London and China Express 25 Oct.1907, p. 810 - col. 1-2, 24 Aug. 1906, p. 642-3.

[103] See Jordan to F.O. 21 Feb. 1908, FO 371/428, with an account of the impeachment of progressive officials in Peking, and their replacement with known reactionaries.

[104] The North China Herald leading article of 21 Sept. 1906, p. 674 col. 1-2; Anchibald Colquhoun's special article in London and China Express of 28 Sept. 1906 supplement, and 5 Oct. supplement; the Times of 8 Nov. 1906, p. 5 col.2.

of the Commissioners sent to Europe and the United States, it is a case of 'ridiculous mus'"[105] Thus Britain dismissed, for the time being, interest in the movement for political reforms, though the idea of constitutionalism thus aroused in China was to snowball until the emergence of a constitutionalist party which, having obtained control over some of the new political institutions towards the end of the decade, was to become one of the forces contributing to the final downfall of the Ch'ing dynasty itself.[106]

Meanwhile, the Manchu brand of constitutionalism did not appeal to the student revolutionaries either and they continued their agitation and anti-dynastic activities with growing defiance. As the number of Chinese students in Japan grew and unruliness increased, both the Chinese and Japanese governments decided that stricter forms of control were necessary. The Chinese government in 1903 sent a resident commissioner to Japan for the purpose of supervision, and the Japanese government, in December 1905, promulgated a series of regulations meant to govern the conduct of Chinese students. The students in Tokyo immediately took offence at this latter curb on their freedom; mass meetings were held, manifestos issued and about nine thousand students went on strike. Then when the Japanese authorities refused to modify the regulations, a body of some eight thousand students resolved to return home immediately to found their own school in Shanghai. A hot-headed revolutionary from Hunan, and author of a stirring revolutionary tract Meng-hui t'ou (Awake!) Ch'en T'ien-hua, committed suicide in Japan as part of the protest.[107] Student excitement was again at a pitch,

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[105] Campbell minutes on Jordan to FO 11 July 1907, FO 371/224.

[106] See Chang P'eng-yüan, "The Constitutionalists and the Chinese Revolution of 1911" unpublished paper presented at the Research Conference on the Chinese Revolution of 1911, New Hampshire, 1965.

[107] Ch'en's suicide is recounted in Chou Lu, op.cit. IV, 1265-71; E.P. Young, op.cit. 114-46; Ts'ao ga-po, "Ch'en T'ien-hua t'ou-hai" in HHKM II, 235-41; also see Brunner, Mond and Co. to F.O. 29 Apr. 1907, containing extracts from letters of their agent in Shan-ghai, FO 371/220.

there was talk of slavery under both Japanese and Manchu rulers, and pamphlets were widely distributed in Japan and Shanghai. The returned students also managed to raise the necessary funds to establish their own school in the Foreign Settlement, the Chung-kuo Kung-hsüeh (Chinese Public School).[108] These and other student activities were watched with apprehension by the Chinese government as well as the foreigners in China, and to the latter the worst element in the situation was the fact that the officials, both at the capital and in the provinces, seemed afraid of these students. Many of the minor local officials, especially, appeared dazzled by the supposed knowledge of the students and were quite unable to restrain them.[109]

It is reasonable to believe that the British Consular officials in China saw the link between these student movements and the existence of the T'ung Meng Hui, which they often misnamed the Ko-ming Tang. In a lengthy despatch from Warren in Shanghai, Sir John Jordan was supplied a translation from the Nan-fang Pao of 15 December, 1906, containing surprisingly accurate information regarding the organization and leadership of the T'ung Meng Hui. The relation of radical students, army personnel and secret societies to the revolutionary society was clearly established.[110] As the Consulates were chiefly concerned with the possibility of lawlessless and disorder, or even xenophobia, if student nationalism went too far, a gradual disillusionment with the new education which was responsible for these upheavals was prevalent. The acting Consul at Changsha, B. Giles, reported to the secretary at the Peking Legation, L. D. Carnegie:[111]

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[108] See Ching Mei-chiu, "Tsui An" in HHKM II, 242-4; Times 15 Dec. 1905, p. 6 col. 1-2; North China Herald 12 Jan. 1906, p. 50 col. 2-3.

[109] Reports to this effect came from Brunner, Mond and Co. to F.O. of 29 Apr. 1907, ibid; Satow to F.O. 7 Mar 1906, FO 371/33; North China Herald 12 Jan. 1906, p. 51 col. 2.

[110] Warren to Jordan, 24 Dec. 1906, enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 7 Jan. 1907, FO 371/223.

[111] Carnegie to F.O. 3 Sept. 1906, FO 371/40.

> "There is no doubt that they (the students) have succeeded in thoroughly alienating the sympathy of the people throughout Hunan, and there seems to be a general feeling that the new learning, judged by its results, is not a desirable acquisition, and that it would be no loss to the province if the schools were abolished ...."

Campbell at the Foreign Office concluded, "A good illustration of the saying that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing."[112]

And yet there were other Englishmen in China, outside of official circles, who viewed the student movement in a different light. "The desire of the people for progress seems to be real, though not at present always well-informed. In the great changes we have seen in Japan it was the government that led the pople; in China it is the people who are urging the government ...."[113] The London Times also observed:" There are genuine aspirations and excellent intentions stirring among wide circles in the Chinese ... there is the dawning of a national sense for which while it develops itself wisely we at any rate can have nothing but sympathy ..."[114]

Thus far, student nationalism had only been expressed in sporadic spells of harassment against the government. In 1905 and 1908 however, two incidents demonstrated that given a cause, the students and merchants of China were capable of much cohesive behaviour.

In 1905 the merchants with full backing from the student body, staged a boycott against American products. It was the first time that Chinese national feeling became a mass-based political movement, and it displayed a unity among the people never before seen. The occasion for this upheaval was the United States Immigration Laws. Since the summer of 1904 negotiations had been in progress to replace the 1894 Exclusion Treaty by which the American

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[112] Campbell minutes on above, ibid.

[113] North China Herald, 6 April 1906, p. 264 col. 2.

[114] Times 3 Sept. 1906, p. 7 col. 3, leading article.

government had the right to prohibit for ten years the immigration of Chinese labour. In practice the Treaty had given way to various abuses, and in August 1904 and March 1905 the Chinese government had drafted new treaties which would revise the existing conditions. The drafts were not accepted, and when the nature of these negotiations became known, the restrictive proposals of the United States government were much resented, especially by those Chinese who had personal acquaintance with the United States. The merchants and students in the major ports and cities now took up the issue and demanded that the Exclusion Laws be repealed rather than revised. As a means of enforcing their demands, they decided to utilize the boycott as a political weapon.[115]

On 10 May 1905, a meeting of merchants and notables took place in the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai, when a boycott of American goods was decided upon. This decision was telegraphed to various merchant guilds at twenty-two other treaty ports, and similar meetings were convened throughout the month in other areas. In June, the native newspapers in Peking declined advertisements of American goods and published letters and telegraphs from all parts of China urging the central government to stand firm in the matter.[116] At the same time, a petition was sent by the Chinese students of the Anglo-Chinese College at Foochow, through the American Consul to the President of the United States, containing suggestions as to how the question could best be settled.[117] On 16 July, a merchant Feng Hsia-wei committed suicide in front

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[115]For a history of the Exclusion Acts and the working of the system, see E. J. M. Rhoads, "Nationalism and xenophobia in Kwangtung: the Canton anti-American boycott and the Lienchow anti-missionary uprising" in Harvard University, Papers on China XVI, (1962) 154-5; Liu Yen, Ti-kuo chu-i ya-p'o Chung-kuo shih (Shanghai 1927) I, 304-8; S. W. Kung, Chinese in American Life (Seattle 1962) 82-5; Liu Kwang-ching, Americans and Chinese (Cambridge, Mass. 1963) 24-6; H. F. MacNair, The Chinese Abroad 79-90; C. F. Remer, A Study of Chinese Boycotts, (Baltimore 1933) 29-31; and Satow to F.O. 7 Mar. 1906, FO 371/33.

[116]Chang Ts'un-wu, Chung-Mei Kung-yueh feng-ch'ao (Taiwan 1966) 43-6; Times 28 June 1905, p. 5 col. 5.

[117]Satow to F.O. 7 Mar. 1905, ibid; North China Herald 6 Sept. 1907, p. 541-col. 3.

of the American Consulate in Shanghai. His martyrdom was to lead to massive demonstrations in Canton in mid-October when his remains arrived for internment.[118] On 20 July the active boycott began, and the mass meetings and extreme agitation lasted till the beginning of September, when a typhoon at Shanghai destroyed the boycott goods in most warehouses, and the boycotting merchants became the chief sufferers. This was perhaps more effective in dampening the spirit of agitation than the decree issued by the Chinese government on 31 August, commanding the provincial authorities to exert themselves in suppressing the movement.[119]

The attitude of the Chinese government in this crisis was in fact open to much speculation. The authorities certainly did not overexert themselves in trying to stem the agitation, and in one instance the Governor of Kwangtung Ts'en Ch'un-hsüan even urged the central government, if the United States should complain of the boycott, to reply that "there was no law in China to compel the people to buy any special quality of goods, or to raise a boycott."[120] It was also generally alleged that both Prince Ch'ing and the Empress-Dowager were in favour of the movement, and sought to use the commercial and student

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[118] See M. Field, "The Chinese Boycott of 1905" in Harvard University, Papers on China XI, (1957) 69-70; Rhoads, op.cit. 158; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih I, 167, III, 230; Woo Sing-lim, The Prominent Chinese in Hong Kong (Hong Kong 1937) Part II, p. 8.

[119] Detailed accounts of the progress of the movement are given in M. Field, op.cit. 63-98; Rhoads, op.cit. 154-66; Remer, op.cit. 29-39; C.O. to F.O. 21 Oct. 1905, enclosing Nathan to Lyttelton, 8 Sept. (conf) FO 17/1690; Chang Ts'un-wu, op.cit. 46-144.

[120] Quoted in Satow to F.O. 7 Mar. 1906, FO 371/33; See also Chang Ts'un-wu op.cit. 198-9 for an analysis of Ts'en's policies. Ts'en (Ch'en) Ch'un-hsüan was a chü-jen in 1885, and subsequently filled various posts in Peking, Kwangtung and Kansu. He escorted the Court in its flight to Sian during the Boxer rebellion, and as result became one of the favourites of the Empress-Dowager. His appointment to Canton was welcomed by the British who saw in him an energetic and able minister. See the Times 20 April 1903, and Townley to F.O. 23 April 1903, FO 17/1598.

elements to promote what in their own weakness they were not able to accomplish; a reassertion of China's place on the international scene and her determination to claim equality of treatment. A first-hand American observer in Hupeh alleged that he saw copies of official proclamations against the boycott at the time, and that "most of them had been posted upside-down, which was sufficient hint to the populace that they were not to be taken seriously."[121]

On the other hand, the genuine grievances of the Chinese were also generally recognised, and American policy often came under open attack. The British press in particular was in sympathy with the Chinese nationalists. The London and China Express noted signs that the Washington administration was "seriously alarmed" and that almost all the United States newspapers admitted the justification for the Chinese resentment.[122] The North China Herald claimed that though it was not upholding the boycott, "it must be conceded that only under very strong provocations would such devoted traders as the Chinese are, cut off their own trade; and they would promptly resume that trade if they could be assured that China is to be fairly treated, not merely on paper, but in fact, when a new treaty is made."[123] The reformer K'ang Yu-wei, who was visiting the United States at the time, also issued a critique of American policy: "The Chinese only want fair play .... They say 'We admit all Americans, why should we not insist that America should admit all physically fit Chinese?'"[124]

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[121]Quoted from Remer, op.cit. 34. The indifference of the Chinese government is also discussed in S. W. Kung, op.cit. 89; MacNair, op.cit. 307-10; M. Field, op.cit. 63, 83-6; Satow to Lansdowne, 10 Aug 1905, (private) FO 800/120.

[122]London and China Express 28 July 1905, p. 573 col. 2; in its 11 August issue it also carried a rumour that the boycott was actually engineered in the United States by great capitalists, who desired an unlimited supply of cheap coolie labour from China. The idea was to frighten the Federal government by means of the boycott into yielding to the Chinese in the matter of the Exclusion Bill. See London and China Express of 11 Aug, 1905, p.631 col. 2 leader.

[123]North China Herald 28 July 1905, p. 189 col. 3.

[124]Quoted from the New York Evening Post of 26 June, 1905, in H.K. Beale, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power (Baltimore, 1956) 222; see also Lo Jung-pang, K'ang Yu-wei, 198-9.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of the case, the 1905 boycott is important because it serves as a convenient yardstick for the study of Chinese nationalism. The movement revealed a significant degree of cooperation and unity of purpose among the Chinese educated and middle classes, generally regarded as the early manifestation of modern Chinese nationalism, although the actual economic effects of the boycott were minimal.[125] The students, however, supplied the movement with its main driving force, and some of the more radical among them saw in the immigration issue one more opportunity to expose the weaknesses of the Ch'ing government. These became the active agitators, and from their ranks came the principal speakers at the numerous rallies. Sir Ernest Satow even went so far as to suggest that Japanese influence being so strong among the younger generation of Chinese, there was need to beware of Japanese ambitions in China, and "we must not be under any illusion as to the (Anglo-Japanese) Alliance being of an economic advantage to us."[126]

For Great Britain indeed, the anti-American boycott proved an awkward situation. While the English press at home and in China displayed open sympathy with the Chinese cause and applauded the birth of a new national spirit in that Empire, it was not possible for London officially to take such an humanitarian stand without danger of jeopardizing Anglo-American relations. In mid-November 1905, the United States ambassador called at the Foreign Office with

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[125]The commercial losses were only slight, though it did spotlight the Chinese problem and bring about some improvements in the immigration conditions. The Exclusion Laws were not repealed until 1943. See Remer, op.cit. 34-5; P. Varg, Missionaries, Chinese and Diplomats (Princeton 1958) 125-8; Chang Ts'un-wu, op.cit. 237-42; See also Akira Iriye, "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy" in A. Feuerwerker, et al. (ed) Approaches to Modern Chinese History (California 1967) 216-38, in which he studies the boycotts of 1905 and 1908 as the starting points of a real Chinese public opinion.

[126]Satow to Grey, 31 Mar 1906, FO 800/43.

an official complaint from the Consul-General in Singapore concerning the anti-American activities of many of the Chinese residents there. The Consul desired repressive action to be taken by the Straits government.[127] The Colonial Office, when consulted, was in no mood to cooperate. "Unless the law is infringed, I do not see that we can interfere or that we ought to do so. The danger of offending the most important element of the population is too great to be lightly risked."[128] They were clearly more interested in the economic advantages inherent in courting the local merchant classes than in American sensitivities. C. Fiddes at the Colonial Office added: "I quite agree that we ought not to be dragged into the quarrel so long as it is merely between the Chinese and the United States ...."[129] The Colonial authorities would only ask for a report from the Straits Governor Sir John Anderson (1858-1918).[130] It was soon known that Anderson was also sympathetic with the Chinese resentment against the treatment of their countrymen in the United States, and saw no need to act beyond a warning to the boycott leaders that they would be held responsible for any outbreak of violence or intimidation in connection with the movement.[131]

These attitudes, of course, gave Satow in Peking an uneasy time. He admitted,[132]

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[127] F.O. to C.O. 22 Nov. (conf.) CO 273/315.

[128] An unsigned memorandum on above, ibid.

[129] Fiddes minutes on above, ibid.

[130] C.O. to F.O. 29 Nov, FO 17/1690.

[131] Anderson to C.O. 26 Dec. 1905 (conf.) CO 273/310.

[132] Satow to F.O. 7 Mar. 1906, FO 371/33 His position is reiterated in a Foreign Office Memo respecting the political condition of China during 1906-1907, in FO 371/220.

> "My position, when appealed to, was a delicate one. If at the instance of the British subjects I had protested to the Chinese government and provincial authorities against the boycotting of goods in which British subjects were interested, the result would probably have been the extension of the boycott to Britain also ... to say to the Chinese agitators they must not prohibit the purchase of certain articles because they were not American but British was impossible without implicitly recognising the boycott of American goods as legitimate ..."

But there was an object-lesson which Satow and the other foreign governments interested in China learned from the events of 1905: as a result of this patriotic spirit among the Chinese, there were now new forces to be reckoned with in their dealings with China. The boycott movement had shown that when there were broad objectives to be gained, the Chinese were willing to make sacrifices, economic or otherwise, to attain their goals.[133] The unity of purpose shown on this occasion was generally regarded as unprecedented in Chinese history: men of the North and South, of the coast and interior, were learning to forget their provincial prejudices and to make common cause.[134] In this way the 1905 boycott movement was really the forerunner of a more mature nationalism in the next two decades, and when this national spirit was so often manoeuvred by those who harboured anti-Manchu sentiments, then the boycott was also a step forward in the revolutionary movement.

Three years later, another popular movement of this nature occurred in Kwangtung, this time a boycott against Japanese goods. As will be seen, the years after 1905 saw a series of revolutionary uprisings organised under the aegis of the T'ung Meng Hui, and one of the chief sources of illegal armaments for the revolutionaries were unscrupulous arms-dealers in Japan.

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[133] Remer, op.cit. p. 35 points out that the boycott is an expensive weapon, as it must be effective to be successful.

[134] This aspect was brought out in the Times of 29 July 1905, p. 5 col. 4 and the North China Herald of 29 Sept. 1905, p. 706 col. 1. See also M. Coolidge, Chinese Immigration (New York 1909) 483-4.

The contraband goods were usually smuggled into Hong Kong or Macao, from whence they found their way into various points in China to be used in insurrections. The Chinese government was well aware of this state of affairs, and had repeatedly appealed to the British Colonial authorities to see that Hong Kong take the necessary preventive measures. On the whole the Hong Kong government had been extremely cooperative, though it was sometimes difficult to get the Portuguese authorities at Macao to act conjointly to make the prohibitive measures doubly effective.[135] Out of this arose the "Tatsu Maru" incident of 1908.

On 5 February, 1908, the Japanese steamer "Tatsu Maru" carrying on board some thirty cases of rifles and forty cases of ammunition, consigned by a Japanese firm in Hong Kong to a munitions dealer in Macao, was seized by the Canton Customs authority near Macao. These officials allegedly hauled down the Japanese flag, entered the ship, made off with some articles on board, and subjected the crew to gross ill-treatment. The steamer was then taken to Canton and detained there.[136] The Japanese government lost no time in communicating with the Canton authorities, who countered that the ship was

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[135] See Nathan to C.O. 24 Mar 1905 (conf.) CO 129/328 in which he explains in detail the measures Hong Kong had been taking to discourage the arms traffic. Further correspondence between the Chinese Legation and the Foreign Office in London regarding this can be seen in FO 371/228.

[136] Memo from the Japanese Minister 7 Mar 1908, FO 371/425; the Portuguese Minister to F.O. 21 Feb ibid; also see the Times 6 Mar 1908, p. 7 col. 1 which concludes that "it is undeniably a cause of grievance for China that friendly powers should assist Chinese subjects to carry on a trade in arms of which the ultimate destination is undoubtedly Kwangtung and Kwangsi, where the Chinese authorities already have no light task in suppressing piracy and revolutionary movements."

on Chinese territorial waters at the time, and that the cargo was meant for smuggling to the revolutionaries. The Chinese government offered to release the ship on the following terms: an explanatory statement from the ship-owner, the arms on board to be detained for further investigation, and an apology rendered for the tearing down of the Japanese flag. The terms were not accepted, and the Chinese then suggested that the case be referred to the British Admiral for arbitration.[137]

Although the Admiralty readily consented to arbitrate between the two governments,[138] both Jordan and the British Foreign Office were reluctant to interfere. Jordan felt that "Active intervention on our part might I fear expose us to a charge of holding the Canton government responsible for piracy, and at the same time encourage the importation of arms for their use,"[139] The Foreign Office also considered that the dispute was really between China and Japan, and that "it will be rather an invidious task, and I should rather hope it will not come up."[140] Sir Edward Grey was even more emphatic: "It is not a matter in which we should interfere at all, unless we do it at the request of both China and Japan,"[141] and again, "Better leave it alone till we are asked to do anything."[142] Nevertheless, Jordan did on 12 March approach the Japanese Minister at the request of the Wai-wu Pu in a strictly informal manner, and conveyed to the Japanese the Chinese terms, now modified to meet the Japanese half way.[143] The Japanese government however, would not

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[137] Jordan tel. F.O. 3 Mar 1908. FO 371/425.

[138] Admiralty to F.O. 7 Mar 1908, ibid.

[139] Confidential note in Jordan tel. F.O. 25 Feb. ibid.

[140] F.O. minutes on Jordans' tel. of 3 Mar. ibid.

[141] Grey minutes on Admiralty to F.O. 7 Mar. ibid.

[142] Grey minutes on MacDonald's tel. of 10 Mar ibid.

[143] Jordan tel. 12 Mar ibid.

be satisfied and stipulated that they would accept a settlement only on their terms: the Viceroy of Canton to censure the officials responsible for hauling down the flag, and expiatory salutes to be fired by Chinese warships in the vicinity of the "Tatsu Maru's" anchorage and in the presence of the Japanese Consul in Canton; the immediate release of the ship; the arms and ammunition to be purchased by the Chinese for 21,400 yen; the punishment of the guilty officials after investigation; and finally, China to pay an indemnity for the actual losses caused by the detention of the ship, the amount to be agreed between the Viceroy and the Japanese Consul at Canton. The bitter pill of these demands was sugared by the promise that in future the Japanese government would take effective steps to prevent the further export of arms to Macao.[144] This was effective at least to the extent that the British Foreign Office regarded that "The Japanese proposal as to the latter part (i.e. the promise) is reasonable ...." and Jordan was asked to do all he could unofficially to bring about a speedy settlement.[145] On the other hand, the Chinese government had obviously hoped for British support by asking for their arbitration in the dispute, and now with this hope gone, there was no choice but to comply with all the Japanese demands.[146] While Grey and the British government prided themselves on having indirectly averted an ugly Sino-Japanese confrontation,[147] popular feeling in the Southern provinces was once again a roused

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[144] MacDonald tel. F.O. 12 Mar. ibid, and F.O. tel. MacDonald, 21 Mar ibid.

[145] F.O. tel. Jordan, 16 Mar ibid.

[146] MacDonald tel. F.O. 17 Mar ibid.

[147] See MacDonald tel. of 17 March, ibid and Grey's minutes on Jordan's tel. of 17 Mar: "Anyhow we and Jordan get some credit from our ally, and I hope the Chinese are giving us credit too - they have just as much reason as the Japanese have."

because of the high-handed manner of the Japanese, and the supineness, as they saw it, of the Chinese government in dealing with them. It was an occasion for another outburst of agitated national sentiment.

In protest against the "Tatsu Maru" affair, the merchants and students of Canton and vicinity staged a boycott against Japanese goods. Support for the movement soon spread to Hong Kong, which was now under the governorship of Sir Frederick Lugard (1858-1954).[148] The Japanese government lost no time in approaching the British authorities with a request for cooperation in stopping the anti-Japanese agitation both in the Colony and in Canton, apparently the headquarters of the movement.[149] When appealed to, Sir John Jordan, who had done so much behind the scenes to bring about the very settlement against which the Chinese were now protesting, quite naturally felt that:[150]

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148 Sir Frederick Lugard resigned his commision in the army in 1906 because he was dissatisfied with the restraints imposed on him. When offered the governorship of Hong Kong, he accepted reluctantly, and throughout his term of office never felt completely happy. He was a man who loved independent action, and as a Colonial Governor, he was intolerant of the authority exercised over him from the Colonial Office in London. He confessed to feeling "horribly circumscribed" and matters were not improved when he found that he could not get along with his chief assistant, the Colonial Secretary, F. H. May. Nevertheless he was an energetic administrator, sometimes overly so according to the Colonial authorities in London, and in his handling of the boycott incident in Hong Kong we find yet another instance of his independent spirit coming in conflict with the routine of Civil Service. See the two volumes on his life by M. Perham, Lugard, the Years of Adventure, 1858-1898 (London, 1956) and Lugard, the Years of Authority, 1898-1945 (London, 1960).

149 MacDonald tel. 30 Apr. 1908, FO 371/425.

150 Jordan tel. 2 May 1908, ibid.

> "... with Chinese public feeling in its present state, any active intervention on our part might eventually react to the detriment of our own trade. I would suggest that it would be a friendly act on our part towards Japan if the Consul were instructed to point out to the Viceroy the desirability on general grounds, that the boycott should be discontinued. His representations should however, not savour of interference; and he might, to prove our disinterestedness, point out that the boycott is an actual benefit, though perhaps a temporary one, to British trade."

However, this diplomatic suggestion, when carried out, did not seem effective in curbing the excitement among the Chinese merchants and students, and the Viceroy at Canton seemed disinclined to interfere for fear of further rousing popular agitation. The situation was getting out of hand, and increasingly anti-dynastic too. A "National Disgrace Society" was formed in Canton, and expressions such as "the country's shame" began appearing frequently in the native press.[151] On 1 and 2 November, serious rioting occurred in Hong Kong, the work of agents sent from the "National Disgrace Society". Lugard quickly took repressive measures, and seven ringleaders were banished from the Colony.[152] Later when the Japanese government requested that the Hong Kong authorities might be instructed to suppress further boycott activities, the Colonial Office knew that only a brief reminder to Lugard would have been sufficient.[153] By the end of the year, the agitation both in Hong Kong and

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[151] These developments were observed and reported by Jordan in his tel. of 6 May ibid; the British Consul-General in Canton, in Jordan tel. 14 May ibid. See also the Japanese Note to F.O. 1 Dec. 1908, CO 129/353.

[152] There was some criticism of Lugard's high-handedness in dealing with the situation, mainly because he acted on his own initiative without first consulting the Colonial Office. The Colonial Office was also mindful of the possibility of causing protests against Lugard's conduct among the British home public. Just commented: "Sir Frederick Lugard certainly doesn't need inciting, and it is conceivable that he needs restraining." Just minutes on F.O. to C.O. 2 Dec. 1908, also see the comments of Harding, Fiddes and Seely, ibid.

[153] C.O. tel. Lugard, 8 Dec, ibid. Lord Crewe personally drafted an addendum to the telegraph: "You will of course, inform me beforehand if you consider any exceptional measures necessary."

Canton had subsided considerably. It was now a time of more direct revolutionary activities, and the Canton agitators had other outlets for their anti-dynastic zeal.

The Chinese revolutionary movement entered clearly into a new phase after 1905, when the T'ung Meng Hui began to organise a series of armed insurrections against the Ch'ing authorities in various parts of the country. Revolutionary activities moved from speech-making and literary campaigns to actual confrontations with the agents of the government, and the students joined forces with segments of the army and the secret societies. Yet during this period of action the British government in London continued to receive reports from its observers in China that there was a "reform" movement in the Empire, and that it was worthy of support. The Su-pao case and the boycotts had demonstrated London's difficulties in formulating any policy in China. Reform in China, especially when led by the educated classes, must certainly be encouraged; but if reform and national strengthening went too far, there was always the danger of another xenophobic outbreak. There was also the need to placate the Chinese government as far as possible to maintain smooth Anglo-Chinese relations, yet not too far as to alienate the British merchants in the Yangtze who were in the main sympathetic to the Chinese reformers and revolutionaries. Thus Britain's attitudes towards the Chinese revolutionary movement continued to modulate and waver until the final revolution in 1911.

CHAPTER VI

CONSTITUTIONALISM AND T'UNG MENG HUI ACTIVITIES, 1905-1911

The Kuang-hsü period

It has been seen that after the return of the Imperial Commissioners from their fact-finding mission abroad, the Manchu Government initiated a programme of gradual constitutional reforms. In September 1906, the recommendations in the memorials presented by the Commissioners were endorsed, and in November a series of changes began in ten government departments. On 20 September 1907, the Court authorised the establishment of national and provinicial assemblies,[1] and in July 1908, the regulations governing the organization, membership and functions of the Provincial Councils (Tzu I Chü) and the Senate or National Assembly (Tzu Cheng Yüan) were promulgated.[2] On 27 August, 1908, came the announcement of the basic principles of China's Constitution, which would be granted at the end of nine years' preparation.[3]

News of these developments was greeted with some optimism in the British Foreign Office.[4] The British seemed especially pleased that the

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[1] Tsai Tse, et.al. "Ch'ü-shih ko-kuo ta- ch'en tsou-ch'ing hsüan-pu li-hsien che" in HHKM IV, 24-47; Jordan to F.O., 3 Oct. 1907, FO 371/224. For other accounts of the constitutional movement, see M.E. Cameron, The Reform Movement in China 1898-1912 (Stanford, 1931, reprinted New York, 1963) 100-135; Wu Chih-fang, Chinese Government and Politics (Shanghai 1934) 31-55; Hu Shang-wu & Chin Ch'ung-chi, Lun Ch'ing-mo ti li-hsien yün-tung (Shanghai, 1959) 22-51; H.M. Vinacke, Modern Constitutional Development in China (Princeton, 1920) 48-93.

[2] Ts'ang-fu, "Li-hsien yün-tung chih chin-hsing" in HHKM IV, 6-7; Jordan to F.O., 22 July 1908, and 19 August, 1908, FO 371/433.

[3] Ts'ang-fu, ibid, 7; H.M. Vinacke, opcit. 79-80.

[4] See Alston's Minutes on Jordan to F.O., 2 Sept. 1908, FO 371/433: "The language of these Decrees is wonderful!" and "The Chinese are quite right not to hurry."

Chinese were approaching constitutionalism by a slow and cautious process. Sir John Jordan, the Minister at Peking, was alone unenthusiastic about the prospects of constitutional rule in China. Recognising that the Chinese plans for constitutional government were based closely on the Japanese model, he felt that "...the march of events in Japan can furnish no safe criterion for a programme of radical measures in a continent such as China is, and in any case there is no sufficient number of qualified leaders and experts available to bring the schemes into effective execution all over the Empire in the time allotted."[5] Jordan insisted that conditions in China in the 1900's would constitute formidable obstacles to a satisfactory transference to constitutional and parliamentary rule. He had seen the traditional apathy of the Chinese masses to matters of government, and he had noticed that the public did not take much interest in the announcements in the native press pertaining to complicated rules regarding constitutional government. In actual fact, since the franchise was limited to those in possession of considerable capital, most men of means were reluctant to make a true statement of their holdings fearing increased taxation or extortion from the officials. This, he observed, would surely result in a general reluctance on the part of the qualified voters, to exercise their rights. Jordan thus suggested to London,[6]

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[5]Jordan to F.O. 14 Sept. 1908, FO 371/433; this view is shared by H.M. Vinacke, ibid 91.

[6]Jordan to F.O. 24 May 1909, FO 371/634. See also Jordan to F.O. 23 August and 10 November, 1909, ibid; the Times of 5 February 1907, p.6 col. 2-3 which predicted these misgivings; and the London and China Express of 22 Oct. 1909, p. 805 col. 1-2. For as experienced an official as he was, Jordan seemed strangely unaware of the considerate and successful local self-government operation in the Chinese city of Shanghai. Perhaps he was simply not impressed. See Shang-hai T'ung-she (ed) Shang-hai yen-chiu tzu-liao hsü-pien (Shanghai 1939) 143-57.

> "In the face of the apathy and suspicion existing among the masses of the people and the better classes, the new system may merely substitute for official autocracy the tyranny of the worst sort of gentry and the irresponsible student, with whom really representative men will refuse to act, and the local government will hardly benefit by being transferred from the hands of a removable official into the grasp of a permanent Tammany Hall ..."

He had obviously little confidence in the abilities of the Chinese gentry to shoulder responsibilities as new political leaders under a reformed system. While his judgment of this was somewhat harsh, he was soon proved to be accurate in his implication that the new provincial councillors would become independent of central authority, and constitute instead a powerful force of dissent working against the policies of the government at Peking.

The Provincial Assemblies convened for the first time on 14 October, 1909. These councils were subject to considerable limitations, of course: they could debate, recommend, argue or propose, but not dispose, execute or implement policy.[7] To the sceptical Jordan, therefore, it was doubtful from the beginning if practical results could be expected of these new committees.

Added to this was the striking fact that many of the government officials were completely indifferent to the proceedings of the Assemblies in the provinces. "A Peking official of high rank, who was reminded on that day (14 October) by the Secretary of the (British) Legation of the ceremonies then taking place at all the provincial cities, confessed he had not given them a thought."[8] This attitude was evident even in the provinces in many instances, and "little public interest was aroused in what seemed to be

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[7] See Chang Peng-yüan, "Ch'ing-ch'i Tzu'i Chü i-yüan ti hsüan-chü ch'i ch'i chu-shen chih fen-che" in Ssu Yü Yen V,6 (Mar. 1968) 1435-45, for an analysis of the background of the Assembly members and their geographical distribution.

[8] Quoted in Jordan to F.O. 20 Dec. 1909, FO 371/858.

considered an additional set of talons and teeth rather than the creation of an organ for the expression of peoples' wishes."[9] The outcome of such a situation, as Jordan anticipated, would be the emergence of a 20th century regionalism which saw the accumulation of wider powers and influence in the hands of enterprising and energetic provincial notables over the heads of the centrally-appointed local authorities. It was paradoxical that the Manchu government, apprehensive of the constitutional experiment, and imposing a franchise designed to eliminate the radicals and student classes, now found itself increasingly challenged by the hitherto conservative local gentry.[10]

The provincial councillors soon asserted themselves. In November, 1909, the representatives of fifteen different provinces formed an Association of Provincial Councils, and in January, 1910, the Association presented an appeal to Peking urging an earlier opening of parliament. This was rejected by the Prince Regent (in power after the death of Emperor Kuang-hsü) in a decree of 30 January, stipulating that 1917 would still be the date for the calling of a parliament. The delegates were undeterred. By July that year, ten different petitions had been sent in, and there was talk of withholding taxes

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[9] Jordan to F.O. ibid. A comprehensive report of the proceedings in all the important cities was written by Campbell of the British Legation and enclosed in Jordan's despatch. Reports are also found in the Times of 20 Jan. 1910, p.5 col. 5-6; the London and China Express of 8 Apr. 1910, supplement; and Jordan's annual intelligence report, 31 Jan. 1910, FO 371/866.

[10] Even Liang Ch'i-ch'ao emerged from his retirement after 1898 to play an important role in the constitutional movement and in influencing the thinking of the provincial gentry. See Y.C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West, 1872-1949 (North Carolina 1966) 259-60; Chang Peng-yüan, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao yü Ch'ing-chi ko'ming (Taiwan 1964) 312-21; Ting Wen-chiang (ed) Liang Jen-kung hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'ang-pien ch'u-kao (Taiwan 1959) 250-8, 273-4, 284-5; see also E.P. Young "The Reformer as a Conspirator" in A. Feuerwerker, R. Murphey, M. Wright (ed) Approaches to Modern Chinese History (Calif. 1967) 239-67, an account of Liang's schemes against the Manchu Dynasty even while being an outward supporter of constitutional reforms.

if their memorials continued to be ignored.[11]

The final petition was presented on 7 October, 1910. Meanwhile the National Assembly had been convened for the first time on 3 October; after deliberations, the Assembly decided to endorse the movement for an earlier parliament initiated by the provinces.[12] The dilemma of the Central Government when it found itself pitted against these two new organs of political influence was apparent, and the situation brought little comfort to the British observers in China. W.G. MaxMüller (1867-1945), Charge d'Affaires of the British Legation, reported that in Peking something akin to panic prevailed among the officials, most of whom were rudely awakened to the strange political climate they found themselves in. Many were in favour of the Throne conceding to popular demands, if only out of prudent motives. Some feared that a fresh refusal would even precipitate a "revolution" against the Dynasty.[13] The British Government realised that "to give way now must mean considerable loss of face to the Regent, but it looks as if he will have to."[14] MaxMüller himself was certain that the clamour would subside at once if the Government were strong, "and had a few heads off - but the Chinese Government is not strong - in fact, it has never been so ridiculously weak and inefficient as

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[11] MaxMüller to F.O. 22 July 1910, FO 371/858; the Times, 20 Aug. 1910, p.5, col. 4-5; Ts'ang-fu ibid in HHKM IV, 8-9.

[12] Accounts are seen in Huang Hung-shou, "K'ai-she Tzu Cheng Yüan" in HHKM IV, 54-8; Times 4 Oct. 1910, p.5 col. 1-2.

[13] MaxMüller Telegram, 27 Oct. 1910, FO 371/858. MaxMüller was Military Attache at the Peking Legation in 1892, Secretary, 1894-1904, and became Councillor in 1909. He was employed at the Foreign Office in London 1902-5, and again 1911-12.

[14] Campbell minutes on above, ibid; Jordan, then on home leave in England discussed the question with Campbell, and agreed that the Regent's "very weakness may encourage encroachments upon the Imperial preorgative." Jordan to Campbell, (private) 6 Dec. 1910, FO 350/7.

at present. The Prince Regent is a mixture of weak nervousness and obstinacy ..."[15]

The force of circumstances soon proved stronger than even the Regent's will. On 25 October 1910, eighteen provincial officials telegraphed to the Prince Regent beseeching him to declare a parliament; on 4 November, the Regent conceded his position by promising a Constitution in 1913 instead of 1917.[16] This was a triumphant step forward for the constitutionalists; but for the British observers the Regent's action merely indicated an undesirable weakness in the face of irresponsible demands from the provinces. The British, and Sir John Jordan in particular, had every desire to see China succeed in her attempts at constitutional modernization; but they could not see any wisdom in the recklessness with which the provincial reformers seemed to be pushing these profound changes. The Foreign Office felt that,[17]

> "The dangerous experiment of yielding to popular clamour has therefore been made, and China in two years or so will attempt to run before she can walk. I don't think a Parliament will make much difference for a long time to come...All that will happen in 1913 will be the gathering together of some hundreds of needy and grasping men from the provinces who will seek to feather their nests on a grander scale than hitherto... the coolie will notice no difference."

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[15] MaxMüller to F.O. 15 Oct. 1910, FO 371/858.

[16] MaxMüller telegram, 5 Nov. 1910, ibid; Ts'ang-fu, ibid in HHKM IV, 8.

[17] F.O. minutes on MaxMüller to F.O. 28 Oct. 1910, FO 371/858.

Pessimistic and defeatist as this appears, it was the prevailing British reaction.[18] Yet it is understandable. Because of Britain's special position in China, and the various agents seeking increased missionary, commercial or political influence in that country, any movement which threatened to disrupt the comfortable status quo would be regarded as anathema by the British people and government.

China's constitutional movement meanwhile progressed. In May, 1911, the Grand Council was transformed into a Cabinet; but because of its strong Manchu representation, this led to further outcries from the provincial councils. At this time there was also a crisis caused by the nationalization of railways, and taken together the various issues created throughout the country an inflammable atmosphere which was ignited when the Revolution broke out in October, 1911.[19] Undoubtedly the constitutional reforms had failed as a means by which the Ch'ing Dynasty hoped to placate the country as well as retain its hold over the administration of the Empire. In its proper perspective, however, the ineffectiveness of these last-minute reform concessions was but one of a host of factors which contributed to the widespread unrest and agitation in the Empire during the last years of the Kuang-hsü reign.

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[18] The Times of 2 Nov. 1910, p.7-8, warned that the situation was one of great difficulty and some danger, and in the editorial, p.11, col. 5: "We do not sympathise with the ardent appeal for a parliament without delay, because we are convinced that it is imperative for the Chinese to proceed with the caution which in the past has been a salutary instinct of their race ... we are unable to believe that China can qualify herself to adopt constitutional government in less than a decade ... " Reuter's telegram to Hardinge, 3 Feb. 1906, FO 371/27 also pointed out: "They are too impatient to give the government's attempts at reform the trial of time, but they clamour for the government to accomplish immediately all which has taken Japan one-third of a century to perform."

[19] Chapter VII.

As early as December 1905, several distinct forces had been at work causing the disruption of society and unsettling of minds in China. The first disturbing factor was the growing strength of near-by Japan. In 1902 she achieved in Chinese eyes a status equal to that of a Western Power by concluding an alliance with Great Britain. She then further demonstrated her might by defeating the Russian Empire in the 1904-5 War. From Japan too Chinese students were beginning to return in large numbers and they took the lead in agitating for democracy and constitutionalism in imitation of Japan. The 1905 boycott of American goods and the apparently conciliatory attitude of the United States had nurtured an aggressively nationalistic spirit among the educated Chinese. In certain circles the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 was interpreted as a guarantee for the integrity of Chinese territory "come what may," so that there was subsequent agitation to resist all forms of foreign influence and aggression. Phrases such as "China for the Chinese" began appearing in the radical native press.[20] The visible degeneration of central control over the provinces, and the corresponding assertion of provincial independence exhibited by the new assemblies, did not help to improve the situation. The local gentry had by now acquired a habit of resisting government policy when they felt it necessary to do so, and the British noted that " ... the temper now exhibited by the Chinese towards their authorities is quite new."[21] This spirit of defiance was echoed by the

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[20] Analyses of the situation are made in the Times, 12 Dec. 1905, p.5, col. 3; London and China Express, 15 Dec. 1905, p.969, col. 1-2; C. Pearl, Morrison of Peking (Australia 1967) 213-4. For the most recent work on the Alliance, see I.H. Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, (London 1966); Satow also gives an assessment of the Alliance with reference to China, in Satow to Grey (private) 31 Mar. 1906, FO 800/43.

[21] Campbell minutes on Scott to F.O., 24 Jan. 1906, FO 371/25. The particular incident referred to in this despatch described the successful resistance of the Canton gentry to new taxes imposed by the Governor. See also Satow to F.O. 7 Mar. 1906, FO 371/33, and Jordan to F.O. 22 July 1907, FO 371/220, which reported on the situation in all the major Chinese cities.

native press, especially in the treaty ports. Mainly penned by returned students, articles in the newspapers now dared to publicise the shortcomings of the Manchu government and in some instances openly advocate its downfall.[22] Sir Ernest Satow reported, "As there is at present no press law to control or restrict newspaper utterances, these are often of the most intemperate character. Not only foreign nations, but high Chinese officials are attacked with violence."[23]

These were therefore disquieting times for the British in China. Foremost among the Powers interested in Chinese affairs, Britain desired nothing more than to see the Manchu Dynasty succeed with their reform programme, so that at least central control over the provinces would provide for the uniform fulfilment of treaty provisions throughout the Empire. Britain wanted a strong government in China, which could then be held responsible for the protection of foreign interests in that country. Now however, even more unsettling intelligence began reaching the British authorities that the anti-government movement in China was growing to such proportions that the very life of the dynasty was threatened.

The formation of the T'ung Meng Hui marked the beginning of a period of intense activity for the Chinese revolutionaries. The general atmosphere of unrest in the country, together with years of natural calamity and economic stress, supplied them with unlimited opportunities for trials of strength with the Dynasty.

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[22]At Shanghai, for example, there was the Kuo-min Jih-jih Pao, (China National Daily) which continued where the Su-pao left off, under the nominal proprietorship of a foreigner, A. Gemell; the woman revolutionary Chiu Chin also published the Chung-kuo Nu-pao (Chinese Women's Journal) in Shanghai; even in Tientsin there was the Ta-kung Pao (L'Impartial) by the radical reformer Ying lien-chih; in Hong Kong the Chung-kuo Jih-pao, begun with the Hsing Chung Hui, continued to function throughout the T'ung Meng Hui period; in Singapore the revolutionaries published the Tu-nan Jih-pao (Southern Journal) also to continue the work of the Su-pao. See R.S. Britton, The Chinese Periodical Press (Shanghai 1933) 11-20; Ko Kung-chen, Chung-kuo Pao-hsueh Shih (Hong Kong 1964) 152-73.

[23]Satow to F.O. 7 Mar. 1906, FO 371/33.

These developments did not escape the attention of the British authorities in China. In the period before 1905 Britons in China tended to be somewhat confounded by reform movements and revolutionary acts, and to confuse reformers with revolutionaries. Now it was clear to them that the source for the greatest apprehension was an organized, concerted effort working for the downfall of the Ch'ing Dynasty. It has been seen that Sir John Jordan was aware of the establishment of the T'ung Meng Hui and its purposes. Now it was also known to the British authorities that disaffection had been noted among many provincial units of the modernized Chinese Army. From Hankow it was observed that " ... all Chinese officers from the general down to the most junior subaltern suspected the men and each other of being tainted with disloyalty."[24] Even in Peking itself, one account reads:[25]

> "In writing on conditions of politics in Peking at the present time, our correspondent recently noted a strong Chinese feeling to oust the Dynasty. Pamphlets subversive of the Manchus are spread about in a scarcely veiled manner, and can be obtained by all who would have them. There is an atmosphere about slightly charged with a kind of electrical feeling that something is coming ..."

It must not be concluded, of course, that sources of information for the British Government were based solely on these alarmist reports. It was usually Sir John Jordan who placed the situation in a proper perspective. For one thing, he and his Legation staff recognised that although widespread, the anti-dynastic movement did not seem able to undertake a full-scale

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[24] Jordan to F.O. 4 Mar. 1907, FO 371/217. Other consular reports are enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 7 Jan. 1907, FO 371/223, and Jordan to F.O. 3 May 1907, FO 371/220.

[25] London and China Express, 25 Oct. 1907, p.810, col. 1-2. In March 1908 a series of fires broke out in Peking, which would normally be regarded as an annual disaster during the dry season but such was the atmosphere in the capital that on this occasion the fires were generally attributed to be the work of revolutionaries, and it has "thrown Chinese authorities into a state of considerable alarm." North China Herald, 10 Apr. 1908, p.73, col. 1; see also the Times of 20 Apr. 1908, p.1, col. 1; London and China Express 8 May, 1908, p.352, col. 1.

uprising immediately. "At present, there appears to be no danger, because as far as I can judge, there is no united action, no organization and no capable heads."[26] The British authorities also took heart from the fact that the Manchu Government showed every intention of crushing the subversive movement by whatever means necessary. A reign of terror was reportedly instigated in the central provinces and numerous men were arrested on suspicion of being revolutionaries. The Chinese Customs officials were ordered to be especially vigilant in searching for smuggled arms and ammunition.[27]

Yet these repressive efforts served only to spur the revolutionaries on to bolder acts of propaganda and terrorist intimidation. Jordan was accurate in his assessment that the T'ung Meng Hui was not yet ripe for a massive attack on the government. But in the years 1906-1911, no less than eight separate insurrections were staged by the T'ung Meng Hui and three by independent revolutionary groups, as well as six attempts at assassination of high Manchu officials.

In December 1906, the first in the series of uprisings occurred in P'ing-hsiang, Li-ling and Liu-yang, villages in Hunan and Kiangsi. These areas were rife with secret society members, many of them followers of the Ko-lao Hui chief Ma Fu-i, who had been executed in 1904 for his part in a brief insurrection staged by Huang Hsing and the Hua Hsing Hui in Changsha.[28]

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[26] Jordan to F.O., 2 May 1907 (confidential) FO 371/220. His views were shared by the general manager in China of the alkali manufacturers, Brunner, Mond and Co., in their despatch to F.O., 29 Apr. 1907, ibid.

[27] Jordan to F.O., 2 Apr. 1907, FO 371/127, and 4 Mar., ibid; Brunner, Mond and Co., to F.O. 29 Apr. 1907, FO 371/220.

[28] See C.T. Hsüeh, Huang Hsing and the Chinese Revolution (Stanford 1961) 13-25; Chou Lu, Chung-kuo Kuo-min-tang Shih-kao (Shanghai, 1938) III, 676; Feng Tzu-yu, "Chang-sha Hua-hsing Hui," in HHKM I, 503-5; Ch'en Kung-fu, Chung-kuo ko-ming shih (Shanghai 1933) 713.

Now Liu Tao-i, a T'ung Meng Hui member and close associate of Ma, decided to rally the local secret societies and raise a rebellion as a form of vengeance for Ma's death. Circumstances favoured him, for famine broke out in Hunan, Hupeh and Kiangsi in that winter. A strike by the miners of P'ing-hsiang signalled the start of a general movement, which quickly spread into the near-by villages. The insurrection was essentially an independent attempt under the personal direction of Liu, although the T'ung Meng Hui assisted him with reinforcements of men and money in the later stages. In spite of this, the movement was short-lived, and was suppressed by Imperial forces within a week. Liu was captured and executed on 31 December, 1906.[29]

As the rebellion had taken place so near the Yangtze capital of Changsha, the British authorities in the area were naturally much concerned. However, they were encouraged from the beginning by the fact that the rebels aimed only at attacking government officials and showed the utmost respect for foreign lives and property.[30] British information was that the movement was instigated by the revolutionary T'ung Meng Hui, which they mistakenly believed to be the new name adopted for the amalgamation of the Ko-lao Hui and the Triads. "The supreme head of the Society and of the revolutionary party is of course Sun Yat-sen."[31] What was disturbing to the British observers, nevertheless, was the fact that the danger in the situation arose less from the actions of

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[29] T'ang Leang-li, The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution (London 1930) 57-8; Cheng Ho-sheng, Chung-hua Min-kuo chien-kuo shih (Shanghai 1946) 37-8; Lo Chia-lun (ed) Kuo-fu Sun Chung-shan hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'u-kao (Taiwan 1958) I, 166-9; Ch'en Ch'un-sheng, "Ping-wu P'ing-Li ch'i-i chi" in HHKM II, 463-75. See also Jordan's telegram of 12 Dec. 1906, FO 371/41 and 15 Dec., ibid; North China Herald 4 Jan. 1907, p.17, col. 3.

[30] Jordan to F.O. 21 Feb. 1907 (confidential) FO 371/220.

[31] Changsha intelligence report, enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 21 Feb. 1907, ibid.

the rebels than from the unreliability and inefficiency of the Chinese Government troops. It was reported that the soldiers could not be depended on to meet the rebels in open fight, and on several occasions they had thrown away their arms and fled. It was also known that a considerable proportion of them were in sympathy with the rebels, and were themselves members of secret societies. The uprising was finally suppressed only after additional troops arrived from Hupei.[32] London thus found it difficult to be too optimistic about the state of affairs in China: "It is said that if the uprising in Hunan had not taken place prematurely, results might have been very serious. It is expected to break out again at the first favourable opportunity."[33]

On the part of the Chinese Government, these rebel activities demanded the severest form of reprisals. An intensive search for revolutionaries and their sympathisers was instigated throughout the Yangtze provinces, and executions took place every day.[34] In one instance, the Chinese authorities again encountered difficulties with the Mixed Court in Shanghai, when they attempted to capture two men in connection with the uprising. It was never

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[32] ibid.

[33] Campbell minutes on above, ibid. His views were shared by F.A. Mackenzie in an interview for the London and China Express, 7 Jan. 1907, p.431, col. 1-2: "It would be folly, remarked Mr. Mackenzie, to deny the fact that the present rising is graver than anything the Empire has seen since the momentous days of 1900...The Revolutionary party has arms, money and organization. In Mr. Mackenzie's opinion, if the anti-dynastic revolutionaries and peasant rebels work together, the situation will at once take a more sinister aspect."

[34] See the reports in the North China Herald, 18 Jan. 1907, p.119, col. 1-3; 1 Feb., p.233, col. 2-3; 1 Mar., p.437, col. 2 and 5 Apr., p.29, col. 1-2; the Times of 1 Feb. 1907, p.3 col. 6; the Changsha intelligence report enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 21 Feb. 1907 (confidential) FO 371/220.

clear whether the two Hunanese, Chang Pao-ch'ing and Huang-i had actually taken any part in the recent insurrection: the only evidence supporting the Chinese demand for extradition came from the confessions of a captured rebel. Chang was a hostel-keeper in Shanghai, catering to students going to and from Japan; in this connection he had probably something to do with the activities of student radicals. Huang was a medical student and wrote books for a living. They had both lived seven years in Shanghai.[35]

On 9 January, 1907, the two men were arrested in Shanghai on a warrant issued at the instance of the Nanking Viceroy. The Shanghai authorities, however, refused to hand them over "on the mere demand of the Viceroy,"[36] and insisted on a prima facie case being made out against them, based on more concrete evidence than the verbal charges of a captured rebel.[37] This was regarded as reasonable by Jordan and the Foreign Office, though on this occasion neither was prepared to go any further in support of the Shanghai Municipality. Jordan suggested, "It seems to me important from a political point of view that great care should be taken to prevent Shanghai being regarded as a refuge for revolutionaries."[38] Sir Walter Langley (1855-1918) at the Foreign Office agreed: "This is all that we are entitled to do ... and there seems no reason why we should go out of our way to prevent the Chinese dealing with them in their own manner."[39] He realized that there was no use

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[35]Ch'en Ch'un-sheng, ibid, in HHKM II, 466, only mentions the names of Chang Pao-ching and Huang-i among those captured in Hunan, without reference to their actual role in the insurrection.

[36]Jordan telegram of 11 Jan. 1907, FO 371/213, and Jordan to Warren, 16 Jan. 1907 (private) FO 350/4.

[37]Warren to Taotai Jui, 13 Jan. 1907, in Jordan to F.O. 18 Feb. 1907, FO 371/213.

[38]Jordan telegram of 11 Jan. ibid.

[39]Langley minutes on above, ibid. Langley had been Assistant Undersecretary at the Foreign Office since 1907.

referring to the precedent of the Su-pao case: "In the present temper of the Chinese they are not likely to repeat the performance of the Tao-tai (in 1903) in agreeing to have the case tried at the Mixed Court, and there seems no reason why we should court a quarrel with the Chinese by doing more than taking evidence that the case is bona fide."[40]

In actual fact, as F.A. Campbell (1852-1911) Assistant Undersecretary at the Foreign Office soon revealed, there were more pragmatic aspects of the matter influencing British attitude.[41]

> "The Shanghai Municipality are very anxious to extend the area of the Settlement, and we are resisting attempts by the Chinese to establish Chinese 'municipalities' on the borders of the Settlement with a view to blocking the extension. If the Settlement is to become an Alsatia for Chinese sedition-mongers, the opposition to extension must be intensified ten-fold, and extension will become impossible of realization."

The fate of the two alleged rebels was thus decided not by any positive proof of their culpability, but because the British, who could have interceded on their behalf as they had done for the Su-pao writers, would not now sacrifice certain political objectives in the interests of justice and fair play. A subsequent telegram from the Viceroy testifying to the guilt of the two men was deemed sufficiently formal evidence, and after a preliminary hearing on 28 January, Chang and Huang were handed over to the Nanking Government. The

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[40] ibid.

[41] Campbell minutes on Jordan's telegram of 11 Jan., ibid. See also Jordan to Campbell, 24 Jan. 1907, (private) FO 350/4: "It would never do in the present state of things in the Yangtze Valley to shelter revolutionary characters in the Shanghai Settlement." Sir Francis Campbell was Senior Clerk at the Foreign Office 1896-1902, and became Assistant Undersecretary in charge of the Far Eastern Department in 1902. Jordan was a close friend of Campbell's and they corresponded regularly on the affairs of China, until the latter's death in December 1911, when Sir Walter Langley succeeded to the charge of that department.

Foreign Office did, however, take pains to ensure that the trial was held in public, to forestall protests from sympathetic elements among the Shanghai community. "I cannot help thinking that in the eyes of the Shanghai community, the only satisfactory way will be at a public sitting of the Mixed Court before the Magistrate and Assessor. They will probably suspect foul play in any other arrangement."[42] The case was then regarded as satisfactorily closed.[43]

Meanwhile, the T'ung Meng Hui began its own uprising against the Manchu Government, in a coastal area called Huang-k'ang, about forty miles north of Swatow. It was a small-scale undertaking, led by two T'ung Meng Hui members of the area, Hsü Hsüeh-ch'iu and Teng Tzu-yü. Trouble had long brewed in the area owing to excessive taxation on sugar and a corresponding shortage of food. Hsü, a Cantonese, had since 1905 contemplated stirring up local discontent with the help of his secret society following to raise an insurrection. But news of his activities became known, and he had to flee to Hongkong in 1906. There he met up with Feng Tzu-yu and Teng Tzu-yü, and together they made plans again for action. Sun Yat-sen despatched Japanese friends to help, and from Singapore also sent $30,000 collected from the overseas Chinese. A date was originally set for the uprising to begin in February of 1907, but again news leaked, and activities were postponed. Then on the night of 21 May,

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[42] Langley minutes on Warren's telegram of 17 Jan. 1907, FO 371/213. Grey's comment was "Yes, we should never extradite anyone from this country in a secret enquiry and cannot be a party to it in Shanghai." ibid.

[43] Warren memo, enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 18 Feb. 1907, ibid. The British Government soon learned, however, that in Nanking the two men were put on trial and sentenced on account of a number of charges that had nothing to do with the ones on which they had been handed over by the Mixed Court. The Foreign Office began to have some misgivings about surrendering them too readily, though they were unwilling to interfere further in the matter. See Jordan to F.O. 1 Apr. 1907 (confidential) FO 371/213, enclosing an account by Consul at Nanking W.P. Ker, and Langley's and Campbell's minutes.

a fray occurred between some peasants and local officials over the price of grain, and the revolutionaries quickly moved in to fan the flames of rebellion. The yamen was stormed, two magistrates were killed and public buildings burned. For a few days the insurgents were able to hold Huang-k'ang, until Imperial troops began pouring in from neighbouring cities. Within a week the rebellion was over.[44]

To the British, the outstanding feature of this insurrection was again the fact that it was purly anti-dynastic, and in no way posed a threat to foreigners and missionaries in the area. "Perfect order was maintained ... I have not heard of any complaints as to their proceedings or misconduct," so reported the British Consul at Swatow.[45] On the other hand, "With the arrival of government troops, a different state of affairs began to prevail, many houses of both converts and non-converts were being looted and in some cases burnt to the ground."[46] One can detect some feelings of sympathy from Sir John Jordan when he commented, "The contrast between the behaviour of the rioters ... and that of the Imperial troops ... tends to show these so-called rebellions are mainly ill-directed efforts of a discontented population to secure some relief from the oppressive conditions under which they live."[47] It is possible to think that Jordan regarded the Huang-k'ang

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[44]Accounts of the uprising are given in Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 717-9, IV, 1300; Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 174-9; Teo Eng-hock, Nan-yang yü Ch'uang-li Min-kuo (Singapore 1934) 28-31; Huang Fu-luan, Hua-chiao yü Chung-kuo ko-ming (Hongkong 1955) 130-2; Chang Ching-sheng "Ting-wei Chao-chou Huang-k'ang ko-ming" in HHKM II, 550-3; Teng Mu-han, "Ting-wei Huang-k'ang chü-i chi" in HHKM, II, 541-5. See also the Times of 30 May 1907, p.5 col. 2; North China Herald, 7 June, 1907, p. 589, col. 1-3; Jordan to F.O. 12 June 1907, FO 371/229, and 25 June, ibid, both enclosing reports from the Consuls at Swatow and Pakhoi.

[45]P.F. Hausser to Jordan, 12 June, 1907, ibid.

[46]ibid.

[47]Jordan to F.O. 26 June 1907, ibid.

affair as merely a traditional-style Chinese peasant rebellion brought on by economic distress. Yet he was in possession of detailed and accurate information which suggested that the rising was really part of the revolutionary movement. Accounts sent to Jordan by the local British representatives described the insurgents as carrying flags proclaiming themselves the "ko ming chün" and that they issued notices to the populace announcing their aims and policies.[48] Jordan insisted that the accounts of the events were "grossly exaggerated."[49] With his assurances that the movement was being quickly and effectively suppressed,[50] the Foreign Office was happy to note, "As the missionaries are in safety, there seems no need for further action."[51]

Consistent in his belief in the non-political nature of the rebellion, Jordan refused to comply when confronted on 12 June by a demand from the Wai-wu Pu for the extradition of Feng Tzu-yu from Hongkong (where he had allegedly fled after the rising). As the Wai-wu Pu communication was based upon information from the Viceroy at Canton, who merely asked that the man be deported from the British Colony, Jordan saw fit to ignore the Chinese Note altogether.[52] This probably incited the Chinese authorities in Canton to secure the punishment of another rebel by means which were not entirely legitimate. It happened that on 16 April, 1907, a Chinese merchant was robbed by pirates near Huang-k'ang. On 27 June a T'ung Meng Hui member Yü Chi-ch'eng

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[48] Hausser to Jordan, 27 May 1907, ibid and Savage (Pakhoi) to Jordan, 27 May 1907, ibid.

[49] Jordan telegram, 8 June 1907, ibid.

[50] ibid.

[51] F.O. minutes on Jordan's of 27 May 1907, ibid.

[52] Jordan to F.O. 25 June 1907, ibid.

was arrested in Hongkong at the request of the Canton Viceroy as being responsible for the robbery. It was evident that the charge was trumped up by the Chinese government to capture Yü for his role in the recent insurrection. Fortunately for Yü, the T'ung Meng Hui obtained the legal services of Dr. Ho Ch'i in Hongkong, and the trial ended in an acquittal in February, 1908.[53] The Huang-k'ang uprising thus terminated with comparatively little loss of lives for the revolutionary party, and some credit, at least from certain sections of the British community in China, for their respect for foreign lives and property.

A succession of five more isolated uprisings was staged by the T'ung Meng Hui in 1907-8. In June 1907, a movement was started in Ch'i-nu-hu, a coastal town seven miles from Wai-chow in Kwangtung. Again making capital out of local discontent caused by a corrupt and harsh governor, the T'ung Meng Hui initiated clashes with the Imperial troops on 2 June and were able to hold out for ten days. Supplies however, soon ran short, and when Imperial reinforcements arrived, the revolutionaries quickly disbanded.[54] Three months later, the rebels rose again, this time in the village of Ch'in-chow in Southwest Kwangtung. The government military commanders in charge of this area were Kuo Jen-chang and Chao Sheng. It is important to note that during preparations for the insurrection, the T'ung Meng Hui sent Huang Hsing and Hu Han-min to persuade these two militarists to join their ranks, or at least sympathise

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[53]Teo Eng-hock, op.cit. 38-44; Feng Tzu-yu Ko-ming i-shih (Chungking, 1945) III, 266-70; Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 720; the China Mail, 15 Nov. 1907, p.5 col. 2-3; 17 Feb. 1908, p.5 col. 3, and 25 Feb. 1908, p.4 col. 6.

[54]Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 724; Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 181; Huang Fu-luanm, op.cit. 141-5; China Mail 5 June 1907, p.4 col. 7 and 21 June, p.4 col. 6. May to C.O. 10 July, 1907 (confidential) CO 129/341; and North China Herald 8 Nov. 1907, p.334, col. 2.

with the movement.[55] On 1 September, the rising began, and by the 4th the insurgents had captured Fang-ch'eng. Both Kuo and Chao, however, failed to keep their tentative promises of support, and the revolutionaries had to flee to French Indo-China when the movement fizzled out.[56] The crucial importance of winning over sections of the government military set-up was now clearly demonstrated to the revolutionaries.

After a respite of another three months, the T'ung Meng Hui was ready to strike again. From 1-8 December, 1907, the revolutionaries held three fortresses at Chen-nan-kuan, a strategic border area between Kwangsi and French Indo-China. This was the only insurrection at which Sun Yat-sen was personally present, and it resulted in his being banished from the territory by the French colonial government. On 27 March, 1908, Huang Hsing directed another uprising in Chin-chow and near-by Lien-chow, which lasted only four days before it collapsed for lack of food and supplies.[57] At the end of April 1908, a more complicated movement took place at Ho-k'ou in Yunnan province, which was separated from French territory by a narrow river. The revolutionaries crossed into Yunnan from Tonkin on the night of 29 April. Through the treachery of some members of the Imperial garrison at the border, they were able to gain possession of the town and a number of forts by the next day.

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[55] See C.T. Hsüeh, op.cit., 65.

[56] Huang Fu-luan, op.cit. 145-50; Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 734-7; Teng Mu-han, "Shu Ting-wei Fang-ch'eng ko-ming chün-shih" in HHKM II, 546-8; and Sun Yat-sen's letters to Teng Tse-jü recording events in Chou Lu, op.cit. III 735-7; T'ang Chen-ch'u, Kuo-fu shu-hsin hsüan-chi (Taiwan 1952) 27-9; see also the Tung-fang Tsa-chih, No. 7, 1907, "Kuang-tung Hsin-chou hsiang-min k'ang chüan" in HHKM III, 367-8.

[57] Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 738-45, IV, 1311; Hu Han-min, "Nan-yang yü Chung-kuo ko-ming" appended in Teo-Eng-hock, Nan-yang yü ch'uang-li Min-kuo 7-16, "Hu Han-min tzu-chüan" Ko-ming wen-hsien III, 395; Huang Fu-luan, op.cit. 151-60; Chou Lu, "Ting-wei Ch'en-nan-kuan chih-i" in HHKM III, 217-20; China Mail, 11 Feb. 1908, p.4 col. 7.

They made Ho-k'ou their headquarters, but for nearly a month failed in their endeavours to make incursions into the surrounding countryside. On 26 May, Ho-k'ou was recaptured by Imperial troops, and the uprising ended.[58]

An unusual circumstance of this movement was the fact that Ho-k'ou fell into the insurgents' hands with such ease and rapidity. The Chinese Government began to entertain doubts of French complicity in the plot. It was true that the rebels had entered Yunnan from Tonkin, that arms had regularly been smuggled over the border for some time, and that a large section of the French press proclaimed their sympathies with the rebels and tended to look upon the movement with friendly eyes.[59] Matters were not improved by a statement submitted to Jordan by Morrison of the London Times, in which an escaped revolutionary specifically charged that the French "knew what we were going to do. They had telegraphed to the tao-tai that an attack was intended, but he did nothing, or we could not have taken the forts. It was he who had been promoted for recapturing the forts. If the French had tried to stop us we should not have dared to do anything. They said it was no business of theirs."[60] Such information now raised even British suspicions regarding French motives in the whole undertaking. An unfortunate incident then occurred which seemed to justify Britain's worst fears, and which permitted the French to seize an opportunity to satisfy some imperialistic ambitions all under the pretext of "compensations."

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[58] Chou Lu, "Wu-shen Yün-nan Ho-k'ou chih-i" in HHKM III, 259-68; Carlisle (Consul at Hanoi) to F.O., 8 May, 13 May, 15 May and 18 May, 1908, FO 371/430; Jordan telegram 18 May, 1908, ibid. See also the Times 28 May 1908, p.7 col. 3; 2 June, 1908, p.7 col. 2; North China Herald 16 May, 1908, p.417, col. 1-3.

[59] See Carlisle to F.O., 18 May, 1908, FO 371/430; Acting Consul Sly at Yunnan to F.O. 14 May and 24 May 1908, ibid; Witton (Consul at Yunnanfu) to F.O., 23 July 1908 (confidential) ibid; "French Interferance in the Chinese Revolution" in Chinese Public Opinion 17 Sept. 1908, p.2 col. 3; the telegrams of Viceroy Hsi-liang to the Wai-wu Pu in HHKM III, 273-4 and 275-6.

[60] Jordan to F.O., 31 July 1908, FO 371/431.

It happened that on 3 June, 1908, while chasing a party of retreating revolutionaries, some Chinese troops crossed the border into French territory. In a subsequent scuffle, a French officer and six of his men were killed. It was in all probability an accident; the French, however, made much capital out of the generally undisciplined behaviour of Chinese troops, whose arrival on the frontier "was much more to be feared than that of the revolutionaries."[61] French demands for reparation were submitted to the Chinese government: punishment of the culprits and the recall of the Viceroy; an indemnity for the families of the victims; the adjustment of French rights in Yunnan, the exercise of which had been hindered by the local authorities; and finally the right to extend the Cheng-ting Tai-yüan-fu Railway to Hsian-fu.[62] It was this last demand which aroused instant British objection: "It would revive the old 'Battle of Concessions' at the end of the last century, and we should if possible endeavour to nip it in the bud."[63] The French government, on their part, explained that France had done much to restrain the Chinese revolutionaries

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[61] Carlisle to F.O. 8 June 1908, (confidential) FO 371/430.

[62] Jordan telegram of 16 June 1908, FO 371/431.

[63] Alston minutes on above, ibid. The Chengting-Taiyuan-fu Railway was originally granted to the Russo-Chinese Bank in 1898. The line was opened in 1907 and was understood to be worked by the Peking-Hankow Railway Administration and was therefore in a sense a Franco-Belgian concern. The British had heard in 1904 that a map with the propectus, issued in Paris, showed that the line was eventually to be extended to Sian-fu, about one hundred miles from Taiyuan. The Foreign Office suspected that "The ultimate object of this line was unquestionably Szechwan" ibid. See G.B. Rea, "Railway loan agreements and their relations to the open door, a plea for fair play to China" Far Eastern Review, supplement, VI, 6 (Nov. 1909) 231-9; Hsieh Pin, Chung-kuo t'ieh-tao shih (Shanghai 1929) 50-2; Grover Clark, Economic Rivalries in China (New Haven 1932) 18-26.

in Tonkin, while the Chinese had repaid this by maintaining officials hostile to the French in Yunnan, and by other acts had consistently been disgracieux towards France. They felt that the time had now come for China to make some amends by granting a request which had been made some time ago (i.e. the extention of the railway line).[64] The real reason for the fuss which the French were making out of a border incident was no doubt the fact that for two years no economic negotiations between France and China had made any progress or come to anything profitable for the French, while the Chinese had settled various matters with the British and other nations.[65]

As far as the British were concerned, the railway issue was now the focal point, and Sir Francis Bertie, Ambassador at Paris, was instructed to exert pressure on the French not to jeopardize Anglo-French enterprises in China by allowing the Chinese to attach a political aspect to industrial undertakings.[66] This prompt intervention managed to check French ambitions. On 20 June, the French Government made it known that the extension of the railway would not be one of the demands for reparation; but if the Chinese Government were to consent to the extension, "the French Government would be accommodating (bien dispose) in the settlement of the outrage question."[67] This was obviously the thin end of the wedge, and not an entirely satisfactory solution. "The methods of the French are calculated to bring odium upon them, and as their partners we share it, but if they must mix political questions and concessions it is better that they should do so in regard to concessions in which we are not interested. We have a grievance, as they are exhausting

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[64] Jordan telegram, 19 June, 1908, FO 371/431.

[65] This was quickly recognized by the Foreign Office. See F.O. to Bertie 30 June 1908, (confidential) ibid.

[66] F.O. telegram to Jordan and Bertie, 18 June 1908, ibid.

[67] Bertie telegram F.O., 20 June 1908, ibid.

their credit, and will have none left with which to fight our joint battles."[68] Nevertheless it was no use doing anything further, and in the end the French obtained satisfaction for the first three demands, while China promised to review the mining rights and railway concessions in which France was interested.[69]

From another direction, French involvement in the Ho-k'ou insurrection caused further embarrassment for the British Government. As the uprising dwindled out, large numbers of revolutionaries began escaping over the border into Tonkin, where they were rounded up and disarmed by the French authorities. Then the French did not know what to do with these men. As they had not committed any crimes against French laws they could only be classed as political refugees. On 18 May, 1908, a French mail-steamer suddenly arrived at Singapore, and some six hundred revolutionaries were deposited with the police authorities there. When informed, the British Colonial Office was outraged at this "dumping" of Chinese refugees. R. Stubbs (1876-1947) an Undersecretary, felt "There is no reason why they should be sent there rather than kept in Saigon."[70] G. V. Fiddes (1858-1936), the Assistant Undersecretary thought, "We must try to get this stopped," and Lord Crewe (1858-1945), Colonial Secretary since April 1908, decided, "A pretty strong protest is necessary."[71] The Foreign Office was thus requested to communicate

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[68] Langley Minutes on Jordan telegram of 11 Aug. 1908, ibid.

[69] Jordan to F.O. 19 Aug. 1908, (confidential) ibid.

[70] Stubbs minutes on Anderson to C.O., 4 June 1908, CO 273/337. See also Chou Lu, "Wu-shen Yün-nan Ho-k'ou chih i" in HHKM III, 261. Stubbs entered the Colonial service in 1900. He became governor of Hongkong in 1919.

[71] Minutes on Anderson to F.O., 4 June 1908, CO 273/337. Lord Crewe was generally regarded as a valuable addition to the inner councils of the Liberal party on his appointment as Colonial Secretary. He was a man of calm judgment and strong conviction who devoted himself assiduously to his work. He discouraged extreme views among the party leaders and always exercised a healing influence among his colleagues when there were differences of opinion. Crewe was Colonial Secretary 1908-19, Secretary of State for India 1910-15, and Ambassador in Paris 1922-8. He was also author of a biography, Lord Rosebery (London 1931).

with the French Government and make known to them the objections to such practices.[72] Beilby Alston (1868-1929) of the Foreign Office suggested that " ... the matter should not be allowed to pass without notice ... it certainly is rather a strong order that Singapore should be used by the Indo-Chinese authorities as a dumping-ground for Chinese revolutionaries."[73]

Yet the irony was that the Singapore Government with Sir John Anderson at its head, did not really object to the disposal of Chinese refugees in his area of jurisdiction; it was the high-handed manner of the French in not giving him prior notice that was offensive. In fact, the additional Chinese labour was much welcomed in the Colony's rubber industry. When the French Government asked if the Singapore authorities would accept another shipload of refugees in July, Anderson readily agreed.[74] This of course, placed the Foreign Office in an awkward position: "If the Governor was going to consent to receive these men it was hardly necessary to make so much 'pother' at the beginning."[75] Finally, protests at Paris were made, an apology was received, and Langley commented that "As the French admit that they were wrong, there is no harm our having complained."[76]

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[72] C.O. to F.O. 21 July 1908, FO 371/432.

[73] Alston minutes on above, ibid. Alston was a clerk in the Foreign Office in 1890. In 1909 he accompanied Ts'ai-hsün on his mission to England, and in 1911 was attached to Ts'ai-chen when he was the Chinese Emperor's representative at the coronation of King Edward VII. He was Councillor of the Peking Legation 1911-12 and often acted as Charge of the Legation during Jordan's absence.

[74] Although there were certain conditions regarding good behaviour, the French to reimburse any costs of banishment or imprisonment, etc. See Young (Deputy Governor) to C.O., 9 July 1908, ibid.

[75] F.O. minutes on C.O. to F.O. 18 Aug. 1908, ibid.

[76] Langley minutes, ibid.

It is clear that the exceptional behaviour of the Chinese revolutionaries towards foreigners as well as the local populations in the areas in which they acted was the one aspect of the revolutionary movement before 1909 which caught the special attention of the British authorities in China. By contrast the excesses of the Imperial troops and the cruel reprisals instigated by the provincial governments appeared barbarous to humanitarian Britons. In 1906 the Changsha Consul reported that the critical nature of the situation " ... arose less from the preparations of the rebels than from the unreliability and the inefficiency of his (the Governor's) own troops."[77] And again, "Since the middle of December, the history of the rising has practically been a tale of rebels killed in flight or captured and beheaded. No quarter is given, and the authorities have set themselves the task of exterminating them altogether as far as possible ... no one who in the past has given the slightest cause for suspicion appears to be safe."[78] In 1907, at the height of the Huang-k'ang insurrection, repeated reports testified. "There is no looting and foreigners are not being molested ... "[79] The Swatow Consul recounted, "Having captured the town of Huang-k'ang, ... the rioters remained quietly in possession of the place, putting out proclamations calling on the inhabitants to carry on business as usual, and threatening severe penalties on anyone guilty of looting chapels or molesting converts. Perfect order was maintained ... "[80]

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[77] Enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 21 Feb. 1907, FO 371/220.

[78] ibid.

[79] Jordan telegram, 26 May 1907, FO 371/229.

[80] Hausser to Jordan, 12 June 1907, ibid.

In Yunnan in 1908 it was the same:[81]

> "It has been frequently said that the arrival of Chinese troops on the frontier was much more to be feared than that of the revolutionaries ... It is a fact Europeans were never in any way interfered with by rebels. The Imperial forces have also suffered in reputation for the disgusting scene which was witnessed after the taking of Ho-k'ou (the brutal killing of some villagers suspected of sympathising with the revolutionaries.)"

Such a situation, nevertheless, was soon to be drastically changed. Revolutionary movements would no longer be confined to small, isolated incidents in the countryside, and the lives and property of foreigners would no longer be so secure in the face of growing Chinese national consciousness. The deaths of the Empress Dowager and Emperor Kuang-hsü in November 1908, served as a dividing line. After this the British government found it increasingly difficult to maintain such a benign attitude as revolutionary activities became more violent, while correspondingly the Government at Peking fell into greater confusion under the direction of the Prince Regent.

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[81] Carlisle to F.O., 8 June 1908, (confidential) FO 371/430.

The Regency

Since the coup d'etat of 1898, and particularly since the return of the Court to Peking after the Boxer debacle of 1900, the Empress-Dowager had been the real ruler of the Empire. Whatever little news was known of the Emperor Kuang-hsü was usually in connection with his ill health and rumours of his imminent deposition by the Empress Dowager. In January, 1901, Satow reported that the Emperor was said to have "... gone off his head and amuses himself with eating tallow candles."[82] A year later, when the Empress Dowager held an audience for the Foreign Representatives, all those present noted the sickly appearance of the Emperor, and that "no one pays any attention to him."[83] But Satow conceded that "It is possible that he may be intelligent,"[84] and this was borne out by Liang Chen-tung,(who accompanied the Chinese Minister to the Coronation of Edward VII) who said that the Emperor "is intelligent but very patient."[85] On the other hand, the Empress Dowager was always accredited with energy and robustness, with a particular fondness for ruling despite the fact that she was seventy-one years of age in 1904.[86] Various rumours of her intention to depose the

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[82] Satow to Bertie, 17 Jan. 1901, PRO 30/33, 14/11.

[83] Satow to Lansdowne, 29 Jan. 1902, FO 800/118; Times 24 Jan. 1902, p.3 col. 3.

[84] Satow to Lansdowne, 29 Jan. 1902, FO 800/118.

[85] Satow to F.O., 12 Nov. 1902, PRO 30/33, 7/2.

[86] See Satow to F.O. 17 Dec. 1902 (secret) FO 17/1527, and 16 June 1904, FO 800/119; Stanley F. Wright, Hart and the Chinese Customs (Belfast, 1950) 846-7; Shinshu Nakakuki, Man-Ch'ing hsien-shih mi-mi shih (Shanghai n.d.) 7b-8b; Katherine A. Carl, With the Empress Dowager of China (London, 1906) 100-10.

Emperor were thus circulated from time to time.[87]

On 10 November, 1908, Jordan in Peking heard about the Emperor's condition, and was already speculating on the vital question fo succession.[88] On 13 November, a decree was issued appointing Prince Ch'un (Ts'ai-feng) brother of Kuang-hsü as Regent, and his five-year-old son for the Imperial succession. This was regarded by Jordan and the Government in London in general as being the best arrangement possible under the circumstances, though Jordan did later express anxiety regarding the upbringing of the infant Emperor: " ... being exposed to the influences to which the late Emperor had succumbed was a bad training for the future Ruler."[89] He hoped for some measures of palace reform in this connection.[90]

The next day the deaths of both the Emperor and Empress Dowager were announced, and the Regency instituted. The coincidence of the two nearly simultaneous deaths led naturally to much talk of conspiracy and foul play. Even the English Secretary at the Chinese Legation in London, Sir John McLeavy Brown, believed that the Emperor was made away with by the Empress-Dowager, and his forecast for the stability of the Chinese Government was therefore gloomy.[91] In spite of the expected confusion which would

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[87] For example, Townley to Satow, 12 Feb. 1903, PRO 30/33, 7/9, and Jordan to F.O., 1 Aug. 1907 (confidential) FO 371/220.

[88] Jordan telegram to F.O. 10 Nov. 1908, FO 371/434, and Jordan to Campbell, 12 Nov. 1908 (private) FO 350/5.

[89] Jordan telegram to F.O. 14 Nov. 1908, FO 371/434, and F.O. telegram in reply, 14 Nov. 1908, ibid.

[90] Jordan telegram to F.O. 14 Nov. 1908, ibid. See also Jordan to Campbell, 26 Nov. 1908 (private) FO 350/5, in which he commented on the appallingly high rate of infant mortality in Peking.

[91] Alston minutes, 16 Nov. 1908, FO 371/434. Jordan however, was furnished with a report by the Legation physician on the medical circumstances of the two deaths, and discredited whatever rumours of foul play there was. See Jordan to F.O. 24 Nov. 1908, ibid. Another interesting account of the deaths is found in Isaac T. Headland, Court Life in China (New York 1908) 8-11; see also Ai-hsin chio-lo P'u-yi, Wo-ti ch'ien-pan-sheng (Peking & Hongkong 1964) 19-20; North China Herald 21 Nov. 1908, p.441, col. 1-3.

necessarily accompany the dramatic demise of both heads of state, the change of government in Peking was achieved with exceptional peace and facility. There was calmness everywhere, and in Peking itself so little impression was made that even the shops remained open on the fateful day, content with merely putting up a few emblems of mourning, and "there was nothing to show that the people sympathized with the Palace ... "[92]

This was a satisfactory state of affairs, as far as the foreign governments were concerned. In fact, the Regency began in an atmosphere of hope and optimism. The Prince Regent had seen something of the Western world, had worked on the special Commission on constitutional reform, and was on good terms with the foreign Legations in Peking. Though not strong physically or even mentally, he "possessed sagacity and a sound common sense."[93] There were expectations on all sides that the new reign would continue or even surpass the old in its reform programme. Admittedly the Regent was yet an untried hand at diplomacy but for the British there need be no apprehensions so long as Yüan Shih-k'ai was present to wield his influence. Sir Edward Grey felt, "If Yüan Shih-k'ai comes uppermost it will be all right,"[94] and Jordan agreed, "He is the one sensible broad-minded man here."[95]

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[92] Jordan to Campbell, 26 Nov. 1908 (private) FO 350/5; also Jordan's telegram to F.O. 17 Nov. 1908, FO 371/434. In his private letter to Campbell, Jordan expressed an unofficial opinion that "as it had to come some time, perhaps it was as well it was done quickly and so to speak doubly."

[93] Jordan telegram, 21 Nov. 1908, FO 371/434 and again to Campbell, 26 Nov. 1908 (private) FO 350/5. See also the Times of 18 Nov. 1908, p.9 col. 3.

[94] Grey minutes on Jordan's telegram of 17 Nov. 1908, FO 371/434.

[95] Jordan to Campbell, 24 Nov. 1908, FO 350/5. In an article, "Some Chinese I have known," in the Nineteenth Century Magazine, Vol. 88, December 1920, 953-4, Jordan wrote of Yüan: "He is the Chinese of all others for whom I have the greatest admiration ... "

It is interesting to note Britain's concern with the fortunes of Yüan Shih-k'ai ever since he emerged as the foremost educational and military reformer during his Governorship of Shantung (1899-1901) and Viceroyalty of Chihli (1901-9).[96] Yüan also enjoyed the Empress-Dowager's favour after the 1898 movement. This, together with his efforts at Westernization and the creation of the Peiyang Army, was sufficient justification for the British to single out Yüan for attention as being a potential force in shaping the policies of China. Early in 1901, Sir Ernest Satow took pains to refute an impression of Yüan furnished by Major G. Periera of the Grenadier Guards, who toured through Shantung and Chihli. Periera had found Yüan to be "... not a man of very strong character, and he was more or less a figurehead and really guided by advisers ... "[97] Satow insisted at the time that this opinion did not agree with his own views of Yüan, who "possessed elements of character which have gradually secured him a strong position, not only in foreign opinion, but also in the opinion of his countrymen."[98]

Satow was probably the more accurate judge of the two, and his favourable appraisal of Yüan was echoed in 1903 during the Manchurian crisis.[99] Townley, British Charge d'Affaires in Peking, was much impressed with Yüan's handling of the situation and bore testimony to his "energy, ability and soundness of purpose ... I am convinced that he is a disinterested and

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[96] See the biography of Yüan in Shen Tsu-hsien, et.al. (comp) Yung-an ti-tzu chi (Taipei 1962); other accounts of Yüan's career are found in Ch'en Po-ta, Ch'ieh-kuo ta-tao Yüan Shih-k'ai (Chungking 1945, Peking 1949) 1-5; R.L. Powell, "The rise of Yüan Shih-k'ai and the Pei-yang Army" in Harvard University, Papers on China III, (1949) 225-56; Jerome Ch'en, Yüan Shih-kai (London 1961) Chap. 3-6; Norman D. Palmer, "Makers of Modern China, the Strong Man: Yüan Shih-k'ai" in Current History XV, N.S. 85 (Sept. 1948) 149-55.

[97] Periera's report, in Satow to F.O., 22 June 1901 (confidential) FO 17/1474.

[98] ibid.

[99] See Chapter V.

enlightened patriot who has his country's interests at heart. He is, moreover, the only Chinese statesman strong enough to keep order in this province ... " Campbell agreed.[100] Townley continued to sing Yüan's praises in two private letters to Campbell. It was perhaps part of Yüan's political acumen to demonstrate at least in the summer of 1903, that among all the foreign Powers he counted only on Britain's support, because he felt Britain's aims in China were "based upon legitimate trade aspirations, which would equally benefit China and herself, rather than any dreams of territorial expansion ... "[101] Townley consequently urged that it was an opportunity for Britain to win to their interests a man who, he was convinced, would "in all probability be the most important man by far in China at no distant date."[102] In his second letter, Townley reasserted his confidence in Yüan: "He is, I think, most certainly a man to be supported cautiously and even if need be strongly, should the occasion require it, as he is one of the very few provincial officials who are worth a row of pins. He has strength, determination and honesty on his side ... "[103] Campbell appeared convinced.[104] This was, of course, an isolated instance, and coloured very much by the circumstances of Russian manoeuvres in Manchuria. Yet Britain continued the tendency of looking to one strong man on the Chinese scene on whom the British government depended as a stabilizing influence against the fluctuations of the Chinese Court. This proved all the more significant after Yüan's appointment to the

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[100] Townley's telegram to F.O. 2 May 1903 (secret) FO 17/1603. Campbell's minutes on above: "He is doubtless the strongest and best man available."

[101] Townley to Campbell, 6 May 1903 (private) FO 17/1598.

[102] ibid.

[103] Townley to Campbell, 13 Aug. 1903 (private) FO 17/1599.

[104] Campbell's minutes to F.O. 22 June 1903, FO 17/1598, suggesting that Townley be authorised to give Yüan such support as he could privately and cautiously.

Presidency of the Wai-wu Pu in September, 1907.[105]

With this background, it is thus easy to comprehend the furore which greeted news of Yüan Shih-ka'i's dismissal from office by the Prince Regent in January, 1909. This was the first major policy decision taken by the Regent since his assumption of power, and at one stroke he dashed to the ground all the high hopes entertained by the British Government of his pursuing an enlightened and reformist rule. It must be remembered that the Regent was after all, a brother of Emperor Kuang-hsü, who was "betrayed" by Yüan in 1898. Nevertheless, when news arrived that on 2 January, Yüan was relieved of his offices because of alleged bad health, the British roundly condemned the Regent for taking this foolish and retrograde step. "China can ill afford to lose the services of such an able man ... "[106] was the Foreign Office reaction. "This cold, callous Decree has contemptuously dismissed the statesman in whom foreigners had the highest confidence, and who stood in the sight of Foreign Representatives for order, stability and progress ... " was the remark from the London Times.[107] It was generally acknowledged that the decision was the result of reactionary intrigue among Court circles and that it signified the resurgence of Manchu ascendency in the government. The Regent had already proved a bitter disappointment.[108]

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[105] See Jordan's telegram of 4 Sept. 1907, (confidential) FO 371/226. In a private letter to Campbell, 4 Sept. 1907, FO 350/4 Jordan suggested that Yüan's appointment was a means by which the Manchus "trembling in their shoes ... hope to save the situation by attaching to themselves the Chinese who carry the most weight in the country." On the other hand, in Hillier to Addis, 5 Jan. 1909, FO 371/612, this policy of attaching complete confidence in one man was attacked as being unsound.

[106] Stewart minutes on Jordan's telegram of 2 Jan. 1909, FO 371/612.

[107] Times, 4 Jan. 1909, p.5 col. 5.

[108] See Jordan's telegram to F.O. 2 Jan. 1909 (urgent) FO 371/612: Jordan to F.O. 16 Mar. 1909 (confidential) FO 371/635, 15 July 1909 FO 371/640; London and China Express 11 Mar. 1909, p. 196-7; Lancelot F. Lawton and H. Hobden, "The fall of Yüan Shih-k'ai" in Fortnightly Review, O.S. Vol. 93 (Mar. 1910) 420-34; the Editor, "Dropping the Pilot" in China, Vol. 27 (Apr. 1909) 241-5.

To Sir John Jordan the frustration was especially keen. He too saw in Yüan a guarantee of the peace and good order in the Empire, which was the first prerequisite for British trade. Over the years, Jordan had thus quietly built up friendly relations with Yüan and gained his support in many matters. The policy behind this was of course to see that the Chinese Government turned to Britain rather than any other Power for assistance in enterprises such as the development of railways and the reorganization of the navy, among other things. "All that is now gone, and we have to start afresh with the handicap of having been closely associated with the losing party ... "[109]

The British Foreign Office decided to protest against Yüan's dismissal and attempt to have him reinstalled. "It seems hardly likely to be successful now, but if it were it would probably have the added effect of inspiring Yüan with sentiments of gratitude, and is certainly worth attempting."[110] The British Government, in leading the clamour over the Yüan incident, obviously had other long-range projects in mind. It did not matter if their actions smacked of interference in China's internal politics. As Campbell put it, "We do interfere occasionally in the internal affairs of China, and can hardly avoid it."[111] In Peking, however, Jordan managed only to rally the support of the United States Minister W. W. Rockhill, in sending a petition to the Regent. The main obstacle to his efforts among the diplomatic community was Japan, who clearly regarded the scheme as an interference if not a threat to the Chinese Government. "The Japanese Government consider that the dismissal of Yüan is

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[109] Jordan to Campbell, 7 Jan. 1909 (private) FO 350/5.

[110] Stewart minutes on Jordan's telegram of 2 Jan. 1909 (urgent) FO 371/612.

[111] Campbell minutes on Jordan's telegram, 3 Jan. 1909, ibid.

a purely personal matter ... and they would rather not interfere on his behalf for they consider that such interference would have the appearance of meddling in the private affairs of the Court and Government."[112] But Jordan and the United States Minister had no such scruples; a joint representation was made to the Regent on 15 January, which evoked a promise from the Wai-wu Pu that Yüan's retirement was of a temporary nature. Confidentially Jordan was informed that the petition was sure to have a "steadying effect" on the Prince Regent.[113] A restraining influence on the Regent's reactionary tendencies was exactly what the British hoped to achieve by making an issue out of Yüan's dismissal, so Jordan's efforts were not regarded as having been wasted.[114] Grey expressed his pleasure,[115]

> "I was originally doubtful about the wisdom of this representation, but suppressed my doubt owing to my confidence in Sir John Jordan's knowledge of the Chinese, and his judgment as to its probable effect. The confidence in Sir John Jordan has been justified, for the effect is apparently excellent. If Yüan Shih-k'ai returns to power the fact that we made the representation, which is creditable to us in any case, will be useful."

For the time being, while the British Government waited to gauge the effects of its interference, conditions in the Chinese Empire continued to deteriorate and confound those who earlier expressed hopes that the Regency would see a period of rejuvenation and strengthening. The chief disappointment

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[112] MacDonald's telegram to F.O., 10 Jan. 1909, ibid. Subsequently there was much talk of Japanese intrigues in causing Yüan's dismissal, as he was proving an obstacle to their Manchurian negotiations. See confidential notes on MacDonald's telegram of 10 Jan. 1909, Jordan's telegram of 11 Jan. 1909, and MacDonald's telegram of 14 Jan. 1909, ibid.

[113] Jordan's telegram to F.O. 15 Jan. 1909, ibid.

[114] Alstons' minutes on above, ibid: "This is satisfactory and I think we may take it that the representations have not been taken amiss, and will do no harm - on the contrary, they may have the 'steadying effect' anticipated by Prince Ch'ing".

[115] Grey's minutes, ibid.

continued to be the Prince Regent himself. He turned out to be a man of little strength of character and no great qualities as a ruler. His ministers would get no decisions from him, while he attempted unsuccessfully to shoulder all the responsibilities of state alone. Meanwhile, as central authority waned, the provinces asserted themselves and found more and more ways of ignoring the decisions made at Peking. At the same time, the growth of a national consciousness among the educated and intellectual classes had now culminated in a "Rights Recovery Movement," which threatened all foreign interests in the country and came close to being a xenophobic outburst. Students were again at the forefront of the agitation; excessive deeds of heroism or patriotism were reported from many quarters.[116] In April, 1910, serious rioting occurred in Changsha, originally caused by famine and economic distress, but subsequently turned into an anti-foreign and to some extent anti-dynastic movement by the encouragement of political agitators.[117] It was an unsettling period, and the British Government watched with apprehension the concentration of agitation in the Yangtze provinces. Pessimistic reports regularly reached London. Sir Edward Grey commented," I am not at all sanguine; things have relapsed since Yüan fell."[118]

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[116] In Changsha some three thousand students of a missionary school appealed to the Governor for arms to be issued to them, for the defence of Hunan against foreign aggression. See the report of the Commander-in-chief, in Admiralty to F.O. 23 Mar. 1910, FO 371/862. In Hankow, bands of uniformed youths paraded in the streets distributing anti-dynastic proclamations and urging the resistance to foreign encroachments. See Admiralty to F.O. 29 Oct. 1910, ibid. For other observations, see Jordan to Grey, 28 June 1909 (private) FO 800/43; Brunner, Mond & Co., to F.O. 31 Jan. 1910, FO 371/866.

[117] See the Times of 18 Apr. 1910, p.7 col. 1 and 14 May, p.5 col. 2; Parliamentary Debates 18 Apr. 1910, XVI, p.1713; MaxMüller to F.O. 21 May 1910, FO 371/867; North China Herald, 27 May 1910, p.479-80.

[118] Grey's minutes on Brunner, Mond & Co., to F.O. 31 Aug. 1909, FO 371/641. On one occasion the Commander-in-chief in China, Vice-Admiral Winsloe, blamed the Consuls especially Goffe in Nanking, for exaggerating the situation in the Yangtze, and charged that "the Consuls are as a rule inclined to cry 'wolf'" See Winsloe to Admiralty, 10 June 1910, in Admiralty to F.O. 13 Aug. 1910, FO 371/868. Langley commented, "It is not our experience here that our China Consuls cry 'wolf'" ibid.

For the British commercial interests doing business in the Far East the situation was equally bleak. In at least one instance it was reported that "there is a feeling among Britishers out here that the home government do not fully realize the situation."[119] The charge was not entirely true, of course, but it served to bring home to the Foreign Office the helplessness of those watching events in China, as well as of themselves reading accounts of it in London. Alston admitted that news from China was " ... unpleasant reading, but a great deal of it is no doubt quite true. The relapse of China since the fall of Yüan Shih-k'ai is steadily progressing."[120] Sir Edward Grey complained that the Brunner-Mond report " ... stops short of any conclusion as to what the British Government should or could do. China is according to this paper heading for one of the greatest revolutions the world has ever seen. If so we can do nothing .... "[121] It was with a sense of real helplessness that Grey and his colleagues observed the quickening pace of events in China which would culminate in the "revolution" Grey was contemplating.

In the meantime, the British Legation in Peking sought to prepare itself for whatever contingencies should befall, by making arrangements for a substantial increase in its reserve of food supply in case of trouble.[122] Substantiation of their fears of imminent unrest did appear in June, 1910. A letter signed by Hsü Cheng-hsiang, "Chief of the War Board of the three Chiang provinces" was sent to all the foreign Legations in Peking, announcing

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[119] Brunner, Mond & Co. to F.O. 2 Mar. 1910, FO 371/863.

[120] Alston minutes on above, ibid.

[121] Grey minutes on above, ibid.

[122] War Office to F.O. 3 July 1909, and Jordan to F.O. 6 Aug. 1909 (confidential) FO 371/639.

that a day had been fixed for a revolutionary movement to destroy the Manchu Dynasty, and it asked that foreign subjects should not interfere on the side of the government.[123] The contents of the missive were simultaneously released to the English press in China, which served only to initiate a wave of panic and speculation.[124] Grey, who seemed to be much more disheartened by the disappearance of Yüan Shih-k'ai from Peking than his Foreign Office colleagues, now evidently did not think China without Yüan worth saving. When first told of this note from a supposed revolutionary, he felt, "If any such movement takes place we should abstain from interference except to protect British subjects,"[125] and again later, "It is not worth our while to risk anything on behalf of the present incompetent government of China."[126]

Such was the mood of the British Government when confronted with the situation in China after 1909. These were totally new conditions which seemed to bear no relation to the period of reforming zeal in 1898, or the Manchu flirtation with constitutionalism from 1905, or even to the recent outburst of insurrections, which did not seem to do any harm to British interests in China. In their search for some rationale for the accelerated pace of deterioration in the Manchu government on the one hand, and in the spread of revolutionary ideas on the other, the British tended to simplify

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[123] A translation of the text of the letter is given in MaxMüller to F.O. 3 June 1910, FO 371/864. The original in Chinese has not been found. See Jordan to F.O. 5 Mar. 1911, FO 371/1089: "Whether this letter was a hoax or not has never been clearly established."

[124] See London and China Express 3 June 1910, p.456 col. 1; Times 4 June 1910, p.7 col. 5; North China Herald 10 June 1910, p.601, col. 1-3.

[125] Grey's minutes on MaxMüller's telegram of 3 June 1910, FO 371/864.

[126] ibid.

matters and fix blame squarely on the shoulders of the Prince Regent, especially for his unforgiveable dismissal of Yüan Shih-k'ai. In one respect, at any rate, this rationalization was justified: the removal of Yüan did cause a certain amount of confusion and uncertainty in the Chinese military administration. This was particularly noticeable in the central and southern units which were already weak and divided. These circumstances therefore provided the Chinese revolutionaries with the necessary opening to infiltrate the armed forces with revolutionary sentiments.

It will be remembered that in the earlier T'ung Meng Hui insurrections, failure had often been attributed to lack of ammunition, bad strategy and most of all ill-trained and unreliable fighters among the secret society bands. Now it was recognised that cooperation from regiments of the Army was imperative for future armed conflicts, and towards this end the revolutionaries directed their campaigns. Huang Hsing had by now cultivated the friendship of Kuo Jen-chang, commander of a regiment in Hunan, which was especially useful with the latter's transfer to service in Kwangtung in 1908. Then two other officers of the Yangtze regiments, I Ying-t'ien and Chao Sheng, also became disillusioned with the government and expressed their sympathies with the revolutionaries. Chao later in 1908 joined the T'ung Meng Hui, and resigned his commission to devote himself to revolutionary activities.[127] I Ying-t'ien, a native of Anhwei, was also transferred to Kwangtung about the same time. Earlier in 1906, when the Anhwei army was mobilized to crush the P'ing-Liu-Li risings, he had taken a short leave of absence rather than fight

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[127] Hu Han-min, "Hu Han-min tzu-chuan" in Ko-ming Wen-hsien III, 403-4; Chang Shih-chao, Chao Po-hsien shih-lüeh" in HHKM IV, 312-5.

against the revolutionaries. In 1908 he too resigned his commission and joined the revolutionaries in Canton, where his military connections proved useful in bringing anti-dynastic ideas into the regiments stationed there.[128]

In fact, units of the Chinese army stationed in the South offered considerable prospects for revolutionary infiltration at this time. Many of the recruits were enlisted from provinces in which revolutionary activity had been intense, and the men were often relatives or clansmen of leading rebels among the T'ung Meng Hui. At this time there were three regiments in Kwangtung province, and among the officers who had been contemporaries of Hu Han-min in the Kwangtung Military Academy were Chou Lu, Chü Chih-hsin, Hu I-sheng and Yao Yü-p'ing. About a year earlier in 1907, the Canton government began a large-scale recruitment for the Waichow army, and many T'ung Meng Hui members had seized the opportunity to make their way into the armed forces.[129]

From these beginnings, anti-dynastic sentiments began to spread among the Chinese troops. To the foreign representatives in China, this was perhaps the most sinister feature of the situation. P.H. Warren, the British Consul in Shanghai, reported that in a three month period (early in 1910) there had been mutinous outbreaks in three areas of the province among the foreign-drilled troops, and that in two cases the officers had openly shown themselves to be afraid of the soldiers.[130] From Nanking, Goffe supported this

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[128]Chou Lu, op.cit. IV, 1324-5; Feng Yzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih I, 289-90; Ch'en Ch'un-sheng, "Keng-hsü Kuang-chou hsin-chün chü-i chi" in HHKM III, 358-60.

[129]Chou Lu, op.cit., III, 766; see also Yoshihiro Hatano, "Revolutionary Movements in the Chinese Modernized Armies," unpublished paper presented at the research conference on the Chinese Revolution of 1911, New Hampshire, 1965.

[130]Warren to MaxMüller, 18 Apr. 1910, FO 371/864.

with the information that the Chinese authorities there were also "nervous of the foreign-drilled troops whose loyalty was doubtful."[131] And in Chengtu, Consul Wilkinson observed: "There is no doubt a considerable section of the officers and men are anti-dynastic, and the army is honeycombed by secret societies.[132] These forebodings of danger were not taken lightly by the British government in London. It was generally recognised that for a return to peaceful conditions in China, much depended on the ability of the Chinese Government to suppress these seditious activities among the troops before they became too widespread. Yet the Government's "future power to do so depends on the loyalty of the newly-raised Chinese troops who appear to be a source of danger to Chinese and foreigners alike."[133] Grey went a step further and recalled the Boxer troubles: "The worst danger, I think, lies in the weakness and contemptible character of the central Government. When their own incapacity provokes a dangerous feeling against them, they will endeavour to save their own skins by diverting the agitation into an anti-foreign channel."[134]

However, for the time being at least, Grey's premonitions were happily not to be realized. The revolutionaries now embarked on a new phase of activities which were directed exclusively against the Manchu authorities. They resorted to assassination attempts on various high Manchu officials, designed not so much to eliminate them as to dramatise their revolutionary zeal and

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[131] Reported in Captain Kiddie at Nanking, to Commander-in-chief in China, 31 May 1910, in Admiralty to F.O. 13 Aug. 1910, FO 371/868. See also Goffe to MaxMüller of 20 Apr. 1910, FO 371/864.

[132] Wilkinson to MaxMüller, 23 May 1910, ibid.

[133] Foreign Office minutes on MaxMüller to F.O. 14 Apr. 1910, FO 371/863.

[134] Grey's minutes on above, ibid.

thus to sustain morale.

The first assassination attempt was carried out by a returned student from Japan, Liu Ssu-fu, who was editor of a revolutionary pamphlet in Hongkong. In 1907, shortly after the Ch'i-nu-hu uprising, Liu decided that Admiral Li Chun, instrumental in suppressing the movement, must be eliminated from the ranks of the Southern officials. On 21 June, 1907, Liu planted himself along a path through which Li Chun was expected to pass. Due to carelessness, his bomb exploded prematurely and resulted in causing injury only to himself. Though the local police were unable to determine the nature of his mission, Liu Ssu-fu was imprisoned for two years.[135]

Within a month of this, a more daring attempt was carried out against Governor En-ming of Anhwei. Another returned student from Japan, Hsü Hsi-lin, was the activist this time. On his return to China, Hsü had obtained a post as expectant tao-tai in Anking, capital of Anhwei, and soon proved himself a competent administrator. At the time of the assassination he had risen to the position of an Assistant Director of the Police Training College in Anhwei.

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[135] Chou Lu, op.cit. III 722-3; Feng Tzu-yu, Hua-ch'iao ko-ming kai-kuo shih 113-5; ko-ming i-shih II, 207-11; Lo chia-lun, op.cit. I, 181-2; the China Mail 19 June 1907, p. 5 col. 5; Robert A. Scalapino and George T. Yu, The Chinese Anarchist Movement (Calif. 1961) 35-6. Martin Bernal has written a Ph.D. thesis for Cambridge University on the Chinese anarchist movement, to which I have not had access. See extracts from his dissertation, presented as an article. "Origins of Chinese Socialism" to the Working Group on China and the World, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, Chi/19.

On the fateful morning of 6 July, 1907, while the Governor was proceeding to inspect the cadets at the Training school, Hsü fired several shots at the Governor, who died the next morning. Hsü was captured and summarily executed, after loudly proclaiming that his act was part of a general plot against the Manchu dynasty.[136]

Two consequences of this incident especially drew the attention of the British government. Firstly, the bare-faced manner in which Hsü carried out his crime, and his utter unconcern when arrested, suggested to them that the strength of anti-Manchu feeling in the Yangtze was greater than generally understood.[137] Secondly the British observed that the local government displayed undue nervousness in the drastic measures of repression that followed. It was felt that much harm was done by the panic-stricken Anhwei and Chekiang officials by their indiscriminate torture and execution of all who were suspected. A woman revolutionary, Chiu Chin, head of the Ming-te Girls' School, was thus executed. This led to a storm of indignation, Chinese and foreign, at the methods of the Manchu authorities. At the same time, it was reported throughout the country that Manchu officials now lived closely guarded in their yamens for fear of attempts upon their persons.[138] If this

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[136] Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 727-33; Chang Ping-lin, "Hsü Hsi-lin, Ch'en Po-p'ing, Ma Tsung-han chuan" in HHKM III, 178-31; Ko-ming wen-hsien I, 125-6; Feng Tzu-yu "Chi Chung-kuo T'ung Meng Hui" ibid. II, 151; Times 8 and 9 July 1907; North China Herald 12 July, 1907, p.69-70; Jordan to F.O. 10 July 1907 FO 371/231, and a long account by the Rev. C. Bone in North China Herald 11 May 1908, 371-2.

[137] Jordan to F.O. 21 Feb. 1908, FO 371/428.

[138] Both Chang Chih-tung and Tuan Fang had allegedly received threatening notes, Jordan to F.O. ibid, and on 20 Aug. 1908, FO 371/217. On one occasion, when Jordan was speaking about this to Chao Erh-hsün in Peking, the latter's interpreter interjected the remark: "This should stir them up a bit," Jordan was also told that "Serve them right" was the comments of students at the Imperial University. See Jordan to Campbell, 11 July 1907, (private) FO 350/4. See also the London and China Express 30 Aug. 1908, p.661, col. 1.

was true, it would have given the revolutionaries much satisfaction in having achieved one of their foremost objectives. The disturbances which followed in the wake of the Anking murder had indeed far outweighed the importance of the deed itself. Jordan thought that, "This form of crime is a startling indication of the difficulties and dangers which the misgovernment of the country has called into being."[139]

Following this, in November 1908, a few days after the change of government in Peking, another upheaval took place in Anking. This time it was an abortive military coup led by a captain in the artillery, Hsiung Ch'eng-chi. On the night of 19 November, Hsiung and his band of followers attempted to storm the city gates as a prelude to a general uprising in the city. But the Governor, Chu Chia-pao, had previous intelligence of the plot, and was able to frustrate their plans all along. Hsiung managed to hide and subsequently fled to Japan.[140] The attempt was ill-organised and had little hope of success against the energetic measures taken by the Governor. Initially the British Foreign Office was inclined to think the outbreak was "possibly ... a ballon d'essai to test the spirit of the army."[141] But with additional information coming to light, the prospects did not appear promising. The British considered the movement important in "showing that a considerable amount of disaffection still exists in Anhui ... "[142] and from another observer, "I think myself that if the able Governor had not been here, the rebels would probably have been

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[139] Jordan to F.O. 10 July 1908, FO 371/231.

[140] Hsiung later in 1910 was arrested in Harbin, where he had gone to arrange a secret deal with Russia concerning Manchuria, and subsequently executed. For this see C.T. Hsüeh, op.cit. 74-5; Shih-ming, "Hsiung-an shih-mo' chi" in HHKM III, 238-9. For the Anking revolt, see Ch'en Ch'un-sheng, Wu-shen Hsiung Ch'eng-chi An-king ch'i-i "chi" in HHKM III, 229-34; Chou lu, op.cit. III, 753-63; IV, 1313-5.

[141] Alston's minutes on Jordan's telegram of 21 Nov. 1908 FO 371/434.

[142] Jordan to F.O. 4 Dec. 1908, FO 371/435.

successful in taking the city from which it would have been very difficult to dislodge them ... The Nankin (sic) troops ... about whose loyalty is some doubt, would also probably have joined in with the result that there would have been a general insurrection in the Yangtze Valley."[143] The peace of the Yangtze had consistently been of prime importance to the British government, and so it was no wonder that when the revolutionaries allied their activities with that of disaffected troops, the movement increasingly attracted the attention of the British authorities in China.

For over a year after Hsiung's attempt, the revolutionaries lay low, until the T'ung Meng Hui was ready to launch two uprisings again, both starting in Canton and with cooperation from large segments of the Southern Army. Preparations for a Conton coup had begun with the establishment of a Southern Bureau (Nan-fang chih-pu) in Hongkong, in October 1909, and a date was set for 10 February, 1910, the Chinese New Year's Day. On 9 February, however, a few soldiers of the New Army were involved in a fracas with a shopowner in Canton, and the police interfered. When two soldiers were arrested, the whole of the First Battalion stationed in Canton came out the next day to seek redress. A riot developed between the Army and the Police, and this became the premature start of the 1910 Canton mutiny. For three days there was street fighting, until a Manchu garrison under Li Chun arrived to quell the revolt.[144]

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[143] Capt. Nugent to the Commander-in-chief, 27 Nov. 1908 in Admiralty to F.O. 19 Jan. 1909, FO 371/629.

[144] Hu Han-min, op.cit. III, 403-4; Ch'en Ch'un-sheng, "Keng-hsü Kuang-chou hsin-chün chü-i chi" in HHKM III, 347-61; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih I, 288-96; Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 766-9; the Hongkong Daily Press 15 Feb. 1910, p.3 col. 4, 16 Feb. p.2 col. 5, 18 Feb. p.2 col. 4, and 19 Feb. p.2 col. 5; Times 15 Feb. 1910, p.5 col. 3-4; North China Herald 18 Feb. 1910, p. 354 col. 1-3.

The massive insurrection was plotted in Hongkong, and carried out in Canton; London would have expected comprehensive reports of the proceedings from its representatives in the two outposts. Yet on this occasion no such cooperation was forthcoming. George Jamieson (1843-1920) the Consul at Canton, submitted a brief account of the events in Canton, but refused to attribute them to revolutionary societies. "The incident may therefore be considered practically closed and has in my opinion no political significance. The rumour, quoted to the effect that agents of the Ko Ming Tong were stirring up the soldiers, is as far as I can ascertain, without foundation."[145] Jamieson deemed it of so little importance that he did not care to inform the Governor of Hongkong, Sir Frederick Lugard, of the uprising until a week later, when the matter was considered "closed" by the Canton Consulate. Meanwhile well-to-do Chinese as well as escaping revolutionaries began flocking into Hongkong for safety. Lugard was understandably offended, and complained to the Colonial office and asked in future the Canton Consulate should be instructed to inform Hongkong by telegram of any serious matter which might involve the interests of the Colony.[146] The Colonial Office was not too sympathetic with the Governor; "I suppose we are bound to support Sir Frederick Lugard, but I do not think he has a strong case over this incident."[147] But the Foreign Office realized the difficulties of Lugard's position: "The request is clearly reasonable ... "[148] and Alston felt that Jamieson has been

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[145] Jamieson to Jordan, 25 Feb. 1910, FO 371/862. Jamieson entered the Consular Service in 1864, and in 1861 was Consul and Judge of the Supreme Court in Shanghai. Throughout 1910 and 1911 he refused to admit the existence of a revolutionary movement in Canton and Hongkong.

[146] Lugard to C.O., 21 Feb. 1910 CO 129/365.

[147] Cox minutes on above, ibid.

[148] Foreign Office minutes on C.O. to F.O. 12 Apr. 1910, FO 371/862.

"unnecessarily crochety, it seems to me ... "[149] The incident constituted the beginning of a feud between Lugard and Jamieson, which was especially unfortunate, during these critical years, as the Chinese revolutionary movement continued to use Canton and Hongkong as its mainsprings of action. Abundant information was clearly essential if British policy was to be realistically formulated, and there needed to be friendly cooperation between the Colonial Government and the Canton Consulate.[150]

The last struggle against the Manchu dynasty before the final revolution of 1911 took place again in Canton, early in 1911. By this time, revolutionary sentiment had clearly proliferated to include many areas of south and central China. As a result of liasón with comrades in the Yangtze areas, the rebels decíded that for this insurrection coordinated risings would occur in the central provinces once the initial movement had begun in Canton. In January, 1911, a General Planning Department (T'ung-ch'ou Pu) was set up in Hongkong, with over forty branches in Canton. On the military side, Yao Yü-p'ing, Chou Lu and Chu Chih-hsin contacted their former colleagues and friends in the Rapid Results College (formerly the Military Academy)[151] and the Bogue Military School. Chao Sheng and Huang Hsing wielded much influence among the Circuit Battalions (the provincial reserve forces) and the Regular Standing Army.[152] By April, a civilian Corp was formed in Canton, eight hundred

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[149] Alston minutes, ibid.

[150] In the summer of 1911, Lugard in an effort to obtain speedy information, began corresponding directly with certain Chinese officials in Canton over the head of the Consul. Another storm was raised over this. See correspondence in FO 371/1091 and CO 129/384, June-August, 1911.

[151] The Military Academy was reorganized in 1906 by Governor Ch'en Ch'un-hsüan into the Su-ch'eng Hsüeh-hsiao (Rapid Results Academy) which led to some dissatisfaction among the students, thus rendering them targets for revolutionary infiltration. See Chou Lu, op.cit. III 817, and Wen Kung-chih, "Hsin-hai ko-ming yün-tung chung chih Hsin-chün" in HHKM III, 337.

[152] Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 817-9.

"braves" were selected as the vanguard of the revolutionary army, sympathisers from the police and navy were recruited, and the inevitable secret societies were organized. The date for action was set for 13 April, 1911. A postponement was soon found necessary: the assassination of the Manchu Commander of Garrisons on 8 April by a revolutionary hot-head[153] had caused the Canton authorities to strengthen their surveillance over the city. Besides, funds from overseas had not reached the collection center at Hongkong, and shipments of weapons from Japan and French Indo-China had been delayed. Then when it was rumoured that two regiments of the New Army were to be transferred by the beginning of May, the revolutionaries quickly decided to rise on 20 April. Huang Hsing left for Canton, but finding that weapons were not yet sufficient, decided to postpone the movement again. The revolutionary bands were told to await instructions in Hongkong. On the 24th Huang learned that the Manchu authorities had wind of the conspiracy and were taking strict measures of prevention. Further delay would mean complete disbanding of the revolutionary troops and the abandonment of the movement. Huang ordered that the insurrection start on the afternoon of the 27th. This time, the men from Hongkong were late in arriving, the other groups in Canton soon scattered in face of overwhelming opposition from the government, and in the end only three detachments under Huang's command faced the Imperial forces. Defeat was certain by 28 April, 1911.[154]

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[153] See the following pages.

[154] This Canton uprising of 1911 is sometimes called the "March 29 revolution," because it occurred on the 29th day of the third lunar month, which in 1911 fell on 27 April. Accounts of the attempt are given in Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 826-32; Huang Hsing, "Kuang-chou san-yüeh erh-shih-chiu ko-ming chih ch'ien-yin hou-kuo" in HHKM IV, 167-71; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih I, 218-222; C.T. Hsüeh, Huang Hsing and the Chinese Revolution 88-93; Chou Lu, Kuang-chou san-yüeh erh-shih-chiu ko-ming chi (Changsha 1940); the Hongkong Daily Press 29 Apr. 1911 p.2 col. 6, 1 May p.3 col. 2-3; London and China Express 5 May 1911, p.323, col. 1-2; North China Herald 6 May 1911, p.332, col. 1-3; Memorandum on the outbreak in Jamieson to Jordan, 1 May 1911, FO 371/1090.

Considerable excitement and panic was caused among interested Britons in this short-lived mutiny. Repeated questions were asked in Parliament regarding the safety of the British subjects in China.[155] It was no comfort to learn that the "revolutionary movement has been highly organized and well provided with arms, ammunition and dynamite bombs,"[156] and that "resentment against the Manchu Dynasty had been actively fanned by the Japanese who have always an eye to their own advantage."[157] These comments came from Consul Jamieson of Canton, who even now sought to throw blame for the disturbances in that city on an outside force, in this case the Japanese.

On their part, the Canton authorities carried out an intense search for the rebels. About a thousand arrests were made; some seventy failed to give satisfactory accounts of themselves and were summarily executed.[158] It was obvious that by this time, the revolutionary movement had grown to such proportions that repression only seemed to engender more resentment, and hence more explosive situations. The Hongkong observers noted, "Living in Canton just now is like living on a volcano; the slumbering fires beneath may break forth in uncontrollable fury at any moment."[159] Even Jamieson admitted that "it cannot be said that all trouble is over."[160] Jordan again noticed that the most discouraging effect of the Canton outbreak in other provinces was the panic it caused among the Manchu officials. In Foochow

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[155] Parliamentary Debates, XXV, 408-9 and 572-3.

[156] Jamieson to Jordan, 4 May 1911, FO 371/1090.

[157] ibid.

[158] They became the famed "seventy-two martyrs of the March 27 revolution" buried at Huang Hua K'ang.

[159] An editorial in the Hongkong Daily Press 1 May 1911, p.2 col. 1-2.

[160] Jamieson to Jordan, 4 May 1911, FO 371/1090.

and Nanking the Tartar-Generals and Viceroys did not leave their yamens for several weeks after the incident, and considerable anxiety was caused among the authorities of Changsha, Hankow and Amoy.[161] This very knowledge, that high officials were in a state of trepidation, served naturally to encourage the revolutionaries, whose resort to terrorist activities and assassination now seemed justified.

Assassination was an organised part of the whole anti-dynastic movement after the formation of the Chih-na an-sha t'uan (China Assassination Society) in Hongkong, April 1910. The Society was not affiliated to the T'ung Meng Hui, though its members were all adherents of the larger group. Liu Ssu-fu, released from prison after his attempt on Li Chun in 1907, was dismayed by the failure of the 1910 uprising and became determined that organized assassination was the only alternative to armed movements. Gathering seven other comrades, he drew up regulations and defined the objectives of the Assassination Society as mainly the high Imperial authorities of Kwangtung, with special reference to Governor Chang Ming-ch'i and Admiral Li Chun. Their plans also envisaged sending delegates to Peking to assassinate members of the Imperial family.[162]

Just at this time and unknown to the Assassination group, Wang Ching-wei decided to make an attempt on the life of the Prince Regent in Peking.[163] He and his accomplice Huang Fu-sheng set up headquarters in Peking in October, 1909; in March the next year they planted their bombs along a bridge over which the

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[161] Jordan to F.O., 16 Sept. 1911, ibid.

[162] Feng Tzu-yu, Hua-chiao ko-ming kai-kuo shih 22-4, Ko-ming i-shih IV, 202-3; Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 887.

[163] He expressed his views and his intentions to Hu Han-min. See Hu Han-min, "Hu Han-min tzu-chuan" in Ko-ming Wen-hsien III, 402; Li Chien-nung, Chung-kuo chin-pai-nien cheng-chih shih (Taiwan 1957) I, 287-9.

Prince Regent was accustomed to travel. The dynamite however was discovered by police and the culprits were soon traced. Both were arrested on 16 April. Yet the suprising thing was that when tried, and after both had admitted their anti-dynastic motives, the committee set up by the Board of Justice pronounced extraordinarily light sentences of life imprisonment for Wang and ten yearsfor Huang. The generally anticipated death sentence was allegedly waived by the orders of the Prince Regent himself, on the ground that the two were only trying to draw the government's attention to the need for constitutional reforms.[164] It was clear to all that this clemency was motivated merely by the Regent's fear that the execution of Wang and Huang would provoke other assassination attempts and further intensify revolutionary feeling. In reality, of course, this only accentuated the debilitated condition of the central Government, and as Davidson of the British Foreign Office commented, "This seems to be rather mistaken leniency and to be a policy dictated by weakness rather than by strength. Hanging people does not usually induce others to commit murder - notwithstanding the well-known mot that it might serve 'pour encourager les autres'"[165]

Wang's example was in fact to be followed by three other assassination attempts in the next year. In April 1911, Wen Sheng-ts'ai, a former member of the Kwangtung Army, gave his life to kill the Manchu Commander Fu-ch'i. Wen's original object was Li Chun, whom the revolutionaries believed to be the single greatest obstacle to the Canton uprising then in preparation. On 8 April Wen stationed himself in the streets when a procession arrived and fired from

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[164] MaxMüller to F.O., 4 May 1910, FO 371/869. See also Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 784-92; T'ang Leang-li, Wang Ching-wei, a Political Biography (Peking 1931) 42-6; Feng Tzu-yu, Ko-ming i-shih III, 244.

[165] Davidson minutes on MaxMüller to F.O. 4 May, 1910, FO 371/869.

his revolver, thinking he was aiming at Li, but it turned out that Fu-ch'i was in the sedan chair. Wen was instantly arrested and executed on 15 April, 1911.[166] The deed caused great excitement in the province, as one of the highest of provincial officials had been murdered in such a dramatic manner. Public opinion in Canton was reportedly largely in sympathy with the captured assassin, and even many of the educated were rejoicing in the fact that there was one Manchu the less among the official hierarchy.[167] What really discredited the Canton government in British eyes was the fact that at the sound of the first shot from Wen, the richsha chairs were dropped and the chair-bearers and the Commander's bodyguard of about twenty men, all promptly fled. This cowardice was felt to be responsible for the success of the assassin, and "the local press had found the occasion in this to comment on the inefficiency of the Manchu garrison."[168] But Wen's deed was ill-timed despite his sincere intentions, as it served to warn the Canton authorities of revolutionary activities in the city and thus helped to cause at least one postponement in the Canton insurrection of 1911.

Soon after this another attempt was made on the life of Li Chun. Li had successfully suppressed every uprising in Kwangtung since 1906; his elimination was now regarded essential to the furtherance of the revolution in the South. This attempt was carried out by two founder members of the Assassination Society, Lin Kuan-tz'u and Ch'en Chiang-yüeh. On 13 August 1911,

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[166] For accounts of Wen's attempt, see Feng Tzu-yu, op.cit. II, 290-4; Huang Hsing, "Fu Wen Sheng-ts'ai chi Fu Ch'i" in HHKM IV, 172; Chou Lu op.cit. III, 811-3, IV 1326; the Hongkong Daily Press 13 Apr. 1911, p.2 col. 4; Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 236-7, which claim that Wen had actually aimed to kill Fu Ch'i, having failed to find an opportunity of approaching Li Chun: Times 11 Apr. 1911, p.5 col. 3; North China Herald 22 Apr. 1911, p.212 col. 2-3.

[167] Hongkong Daily Press 11 Apr. 1911, p.2 Col. 6.

[168] Jamieson to Jordan (undated) in Jordan to F.O. 28 Apr. 1911, FO 371/1090.

a home-made bomb was thrown at Li and his entourage, but Li was only slightly injured while Lin was shot dead by the Admiral's guards.[169] A more fruitful attempt was recorded in October, soon after the revolution of 1911 had broken out in Hankow. The target this time was the Manchu General Feng-shan, noted for his cunning and ferocity, who was coming to Canton on a special mission to curb the disturbances. Li P'ei-chi and the others achieved their aim on 25 October when their bomb killed Feng-shan, while they managed to escape unhurt to Hongkong.[170]

These isolated instances of terrorist activity were on the whole regarded as ill-advised and senseless by the British authorities who observed the proceedings with distaste; yet they were also a source of satisfaction to the British representatives in the South in that these were the work of "a few desperate characters only"[171] and did not have the destructive potential of a full-scale armed revolt. This was of course, not the attitude of the Chinese revolutionaries themselves. When morale was low among their party, when insurrections all seemed to end in failure and result in mass executions, such outward shows of revolutionary zeal were essential aspects of the programme to keep the revolution going. In one instance, the repeated efforts against Li-chun, for example, led to the latter's renunciation of the Manchus when the revolution was in full swing, and resulted in facilitating the bloodless transfer to republican government in Kwangtung.[172]

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[169] Ts'ao Ya-po, "Kuang-chou san-yüeh erh-shih-chiu jih chih-i" in HHKM IV, 241-2; Chou Lu, op.cit. III 887-90; Feng Tzu-yu op.cit. IV, 203-8, 215-6; Jordan to F.O. 30 Aug. 1911 enclosing Jamieson to Jordan, 14 Aug. 1911, FO 371/1092; North China Herald 19 Aug. 1911 p.477, col. 2-3; London and China Express 25 Aug. 1911, p.605, col. 1.

[170] Chou Lu, op.cit. III, 891-3; Feng Tzu-yu, op.cit. IV, 209-11; Ts'ao Ya-po op.cit. in HHKM IV, 242-4; the Hongkong Daily Press, 26 Oct. 1911, p.2 col. 4, and 28 Oct. p.3 col. 1.

[171] See Admiralty to F.O., 2 Nov. 1911 (confidential) FO 371/1096.

[172] For details see unpublished M.A. thesis, Mary Chan Man-yue "Chinese Revolutionaries in Hongkong, 1895-1911" University of Hongkong, 1961 p.231-5.

The period 1905-1911 has therefore special significance in the history of the Chinese revolutionary movement. For the Chinese rebels, it was a necessary and frustrating time. They pitted their strength frequently against the government, and failed, not realizing that the numerous rebellions were merely stepping-stones for the final eruption in 1911. These early contests demonstrated to the T'ung Meng Hui and its military leaders the weaknesses inherent in their movement and the formidable forces of the Imperial troops.[173] Most important of all, they revealed the need to rally professional military assistance to their programme; and it was the military which finally made the revolution possible in October, 1911.

For the British Government, which was watching events in China with keen interest, and sometimes with apprehension, 1905-1911 was a time for reassessment of their outlook and attitude. Britain had always stood for a strong China, especially a strong central authority with whom to deal in matters of trade, diplomacy and missionary endeavour. When that central authority seemed weakened by foreign war, and when there were forces within the country seeking its revitalization (as in 1895-98) Britain gave full-hearted support to the Reformers. Then when the central Government decided to take the initiative and institute wide-ranging constitutional reforms, (as in 1905-11) Britain greeted the movement with good wishes and encouragement.

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[173] There is much truth in the contention of Lyon Sharman, Sun Yat-sen, His Life and Its Meaning (New York 1934 2nd ed 1965) 109-110, that the early uprisings "seem naively ambitious projects, considering the small force of amateurs. Faultiness of coordination was the commonest cause of disaster; some one acted prematurely, failed to keep an appointed date, or divulged secrets. Shortage of ammunition was perennial." See also Shelley H. Cheng, "The Chinese Republican Movement, 1894-1912," an unpublished paper presented to the International Conference on Asian History held at the University of Hongkong, 1964, p.7-8.

But reform from above seemed not to work in China. Meanwhile the anti-dynastic movement gained ground and made itself noticed. It was thus necessary to decide how to react to this new force on the scene. For a time Yüan Shih-k'ai seemed to offer the best hopes for a strong man at the helm, until his dismissal from office in 1909. The situation was thus drastically changed, insurrections began to break out over the countryside, and the newly-elected constitutionalists loudly demanded hasty measures of reform. During 1905-11, Britain was thus mainly concerned with a revaluation of its stake in China, endeavouring not to be committed to any one force in the field until it was time to make a pronouncement.

The time for a definite stand would soon come, of course, when the revolution proper began in October, 1911, and Britain found itself dealing once again with Yüan Shih-k'ai.

CHAPTER VII

THE REVOLUTION, 1911-12

The Outbreak

By 1911 anti-Manchu sentiment had spread to most of the important population centres of South and Central China. Apart from the efforts of the revolutionaries working towards the downfall of the Manchu rulers, there were other factors in the situation which contributed to the final disintegration of the Ch'ing Dynasty. We have seen that the government-sponsored reform programme of 1905-1911 only produced effects which were detrimental to the Ch'ing cause: the new students produced by the educational reforms became the intellectual leaders of the revolutionary movement; the new armies resulting from military reforms became targets of infiltration by the rebels; and constitutional reforms led to agitation for political concessions from the Throne which went far beyond what the government had originally intended. Amidst these potentially dangerous issues the increasing alienation of the government from large segments of the population came to focus on the problem of the nationalization of railroads.[1]

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[1] Details of the railway question will not be entered here. Well-documented studies of the subject include Cheng Lin, The Chinese Railways (Shanghai 1935) especially p. 101-3; Hsieh Pin, Chung-kuo t'ieh-tao shih (Shanghai 1929) which gives clear accounts of all the foreign-operated railways; "Ssu-ch'uan tieh-lu an tang-an" in HHKM IV, 457-522; Li Kuo-ch'i, Chung-kuo tsao-ch'i t'ieh-lu ching-ying (Taipei, 1961) 117-78; Tai Chih-li, Ssu-ch'uan pao-lu yün-tung shih-liao (Peking 1959) which is the most comprehensive documented account of events from 1903 to 1912.
For the biography and career of Sheng Hsüan-huai see Albert Feuerwerker, China's Early Industrialization, Sheng Hsüan-huai and Mandarin Enterprise (Cambridge, Mass. 1958) 58-95; and Howard Boorman, Men and Politics in Modern China (New York, 1960) 109-14.

In all fairness the policy proposed by Sheng Hsüan-huai, (1844-1916) president of the Communications Ministry since January 1911, to put under central control the main railway lines, was probably sound. But the measures were directly linked to the loan activities of the foreign Powers, which in turn generated struggles among the Imperial relatives and other high officials for shares of the commissions. At the same time, government action towards the privately-donated shares of the Szechwan-Hankow and Canton-Hankow Railroads was inconsistent and unfair, and in the end brutal tactics of arrests and murders of railway petitioners were resorted to. This brought about the rebellious situation in Szechwan province, where, it has been contended, the outcry though not based on any real revolutionary inclinations, had in fact instigated a "social revolution", which soon developed into a part of the "national revolution."[2]

The basic area of contention in the railway controversy was the old struggle between central control and provincial autonomy. This fact was recognised by the London Times as early as November, 1907, and the paper suggested that the best course for Britain to take in the matter was to stand solidly behind the central government.[3] This course of action, providing as it would some form of protection for Britain's high financial stakes in the Chinese railways, turned out to be the only possible stand the British government could take in the years ahead.[4] In 1911, the

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[2]Kuo Mo-jo, "Fan-cheng ch'ien-hou" in HHKM IV, 449. See also the North China Herald 24 June, 1911, 801-2, which analyses the reasons why government policy regarding railways was so vehemently objected to by various sectors of Chinese society.

[3]London Times, 16 November, 1907, p. 5, col. 1.

[4]See E-tu Zen Sun, Chinese Railways and British interests 1895-1911 (New York 1954) 5-6.

railway issue had already reached crisis proportions in Szechwan. On 9 May, 1911, the Edict authorising the nationalization of trunk lines was promulgated; Szechwan reacted immediately in the form of bloodshed and armed rebellion, fomented by the Railway Conservation League, Ssu-ch'uan pao-lu t'ung-chih Hui. British press and official opinion stood clearly behind the decision of Peking to quell the agitation, by forceful means if necessary. The North China Herald urged that "A resolute display of strength on the part of Peking should therefore be enough to overawe the agitators ... a single sharp lesson might work wonders as with a naughty child .... "[5] Sir Francis A. Campbell, Assistant Secretary at the Foreign Office, agreed with this. He put in a nut-shell the reason why Britain could not afford to see the provincial movement get out of hand: "If they (Peking) give way the example of Szechwan will assuredly be followed by other provinces, with the result that no railways will be built, and foreign trade suffer correspondingly."[6] He further felt that the British Consul-General at Chengtu, W. H. Wilkinson, "ought to have put some back-bone into the authorities and told them to stand firm .... "[7]

Despite such moral support from British opinion, the days of the Manchu Dynasty in China were already numbered, as events elsewhere in the Empire moved rapidly to a climax. After the failure of the 1911 uprising in Canton, Huang Hsing and the other revolutionaries decided to stage another attempt later the same year in Hupeh, where conditions

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[5] North China Herald 9 Sept. 1911, p. 617, leader.

[6] F. Campbell to Sir J. Jordan, 15 Sept. 1911 (private) FO 350/1.

[7] Campbell to Jordan, 22 Sept. 1911 (private) ibid.

appeared ripe for action.[8] On 9 October, 1911, a bomb accidentally exploded in the revolutionary headquarters in Hankow. The place was searched by local police, and some revolutionaries were arrested; most important of all, it was widely rumoured that in the raid the authorities had got hold of a list of T'ung Meng Hui members. Since many members of the armed forces in the area were now implicated, they advocated immediate action. The Chinese Revolution was a reality by 10 October, 1911. On 12 October the Viceroy of Wuchang took refuge on a Chinese cruiser anchored astern of a British gun-boat. By the next day the city was entirely in the hands of the revolutionaries. On 14 October, Yüan Shih-k'ai was recalled to office by Peking, and appointed Viceroy of the Hu-kuang provinces. The revolutionary movement spread rapidly as city after city declared its independence from Peking, culminating in the fall of Nanking to the revolutionaries on 2 December, 1911.[9]

Initial Reactions

The suddenness of the Revolution and the seeming ease with which the revolutionaries claimed province after province within the first two

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[8] Huang Hsing's analysis of the Hupeh situation, and the decision for action, is seen in a letter he wrote to Feng Tzu-yu, dated 5 October, 1911, in C.T. Hsüeh, Huang Hsing and the Chinese Revolution (Stanford 1961) 104-6.

[9] Reliable accounts of these events are given in C.T. Hsüeh, op.cit. 107-117; Chou Lu, Chung-kuo Kuo-min-tang Shih-kao (Shanghai 1938) III, 911-922; Lo Chia-lun (ed) Kuo-fu Sun Chung-shan hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'u-kao (Taipei 1958) I, 248-84; H.G.W. Woodhead, "The Revolution in China, 1911-1912" in The China Year Book, 1912; Chung-hua min-kuo kai-kuo wu-shih-nien wen-hsien pien-mu wei-yüan-hui (ed) Hsin-hai ko-ming yü Min-kuo chien-yüan (Taiwan 1961-2) Vol. I; Chih-chieh, Wu-ch'ang ch'i-i ti-ku-shih (Hankow 1956) 26-34; Josef Fass, "Revolutionary activity in the province Hu-pei and the Wu-ch'ang uprising of 1911" in Archiv Orientalni XXVIII, 1 (1960) 127-49; Ts'ao Ya-po, Wu-ch'ang ko-ming chen-shih (Shanghai 1930) Part II, and "Wu-ch'ang ch'i-i" in HHKM V, 104-168.

months of the uprising took the British, as well as the other interested Powers, completely by surprise.[10] In British official circles the tendency was at first to be fairly sympathetic towards the revolutionaries, doubtlessly subscribing to the theory that nothing could be worse than the rule of the Manchus under the Regency of Prince Ch'un. There was also the possibility that with a changed government there would be better opportunities for foreign trade and commerce. Furthermore in line with the thinking of missionaries and other educators with knowledge of China, the new regime promised to be in every way more enlightened and Western-oriented than the Manchus, since the revolutionaries were themselves mostly products of the new education.

Yet for all such sentiments in the favour of the revolutionaries, Britain came out openly neither for the rebels, generally identified with the South, nor the remnants of the government at Peking in the North. In the disorderly conditions and facing an unpredictable future, Britain was

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[10] The London Times was the only foreign paper which claimed not to have been startled by news of the Revolution: "The rebellion has not come as a surprise to those who have had special opportunities of watching Chinese affairs during the last year or two. 'Experience proves,' says Tocqueville, 'that the most perilous moment for a bad government is that in which it begins to reform itself. The ills borne patiently because they seem to be inevitable appear insupportable when once the idea is conceived of getting rid of them.' The truth of this has again been exemplified in the case of China ... " Times, 14 October 1911, p. 7, col. 3-4, leading article. The editorial no doubt reflected the sentiments of the Times' Peking correspondent, Dr. G.E. Morrison, who had little love for the Manchu Dynasty. Morrison telegraphed on 13 October 1911. "The Manchu dynasty is in danger. The sympathies of the immense mass of educated Chinese are all with the revolutionaries. Little sympathy is expressed for the corrupt and effete Manchu dynasty with its eunuchs and other barbaric surroundings. The Court is in great anxiety and the outlook for the throne ... ominous." See Cyril Pearl, Morrison of Peking (Australia and London 1967) p. 288.

not going to burn any of its bridges and lose the support and friendship of either side prematurely. The British Government proclaimed a policy of neutrality in the Chinese Revolution.

Neutrality, however, was feasible only when the other Powers could also be prevented from taking advantage of the situation and supplying help to the adversaries in the conflict. Towards this end Britain thus worked, successfully, to bring pressure on France, Germany and the United States to agree to take only concerted action in China.[11] With Japan, however, the task was more complicated, in view of Japan's special geographical, political and economic interests in China and the outcome of the Revolution. Later when the cause of the Manchus became increasingly desperate and Britain decided that the only safe course to take was to pin its hopes on the strong man Yüan Shih-k'ai, Japan was reluctant to go along, having no great liking for Yüan anyway. Then when the future form of government for China came under discussion during the negotiations between North and South, Britain was willing to accept the overwhelming clamour of the Southern delegates for a Republic, while Japan did not hide the fact that a republic so near her shores was anathema to her. Finally when it was necessary to obtain concerted action from the Powers with regard to the financing of the new Chinese Government of Yüan Shih-k'ai, the Japanese were not averse to resorting to signing loan contracts with the South in defiance of Britain's specific pleas for financial nonintervention.

Despite these difficulties in working with Japanese allies, British policy in the Chinese Revolution was remarkably successful, insofar as it achieved the three limited aims of alienating neither of the adversaries,

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[11] For reactions to the Revolution from these Powers see G. Reid, The Manchu Abdication and the Powers 1908-1912, an episode in pre-war diplomacy (California 1935).

preventing the prolongation of hostilities and anarchy in the countryside, and strengthening Yüan's hand in securing the abdication of the Manchus and the subsequent establishment of the Chinese Republic.

Sir John Jordan's first report to come out of Peking on the outbreak of the Revolution indicated relief that the movement was entirely anti-dynastic and not anti-foreign in any respect.[12] But the seriousness of the situation was appreciated by the Foreign Office.[13] The reasurrances of the Chinese Minister in London that the disturbances were only motivated by anger against foreign capital in the railway question were not entirely convincing.[14] In fact, Jordan feared that the Chinese Minister was purposely misrepresenting the facts to "save face," and suggested to Campbell, "Ask my friend Liu to explain why the revolutionaries are killing every Manchu they can lay hands upon and are everywhere proclaiming death to the Dynasty ... "[15]

Having ascertained the nature of the uprising, Jordan found little cause for encouragement for the Manchus, as reports reached him daily of the revolutionary successes in the provinces. The unreliability of the Imperial troops, the unpreparedness of Peking for these emergencies, and by contrast the outstanding leadership of the revolutionary forces by Li Yüan-hung (1864 1928), a trained and experienced Wuchang commander, so impressed Jordan that he felt "the revolutionary cause seems to me the more hopeful of the two."[16]

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[12] Jordan telegraph to F.O. 11 October 1911, FO 371/1093.

[13] Campbell Minutes on Jordan tel. 12 Oct. 1911, ibid.

[14] Liu Yü-lin told this to Alston on 10 October. See Alston's minutes on Jordan's tel. of 11 October, ibid. See also Liu's statement in Times of 14 October 1911, p.6 col. 1-2 in which he concluded, "whatever the rebels may do locally, I am certain that they cannot bring about a general revolution."

[15] Jordan to Campbell, 30 Oct. 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[16] Jordan to Campbell, ibid. See also Shen Yün-lung, Li Yuan-hung P'ing-chuan (Taiwan 1963) 1-39.

Jordan again stated, "The whole movement is being conducted in such an orderly way as to make revolution respectable and even here (in Peking) commands a good deal of sympathy."[17] The Manchus meanwhile, "are trembling in their shoes ... "[18] Campbell shared his views: "Taking a broad view, it is doubtful policy on our part, I think, to bolster up this corrupt and rotten Manchu government. I can hardly help feeling that putting aside present convenience, it might be the best thing for China in the long run if the rebellion were successful ... "[19]

These were only the privately-expressed, initial reactions of two competent British officials concerned with the Chinese scene. The British government had made no pronouncements yet as far as policy was concerned. But on 16 October, two days after Yüan's recall, Sir Edward Grey arrived at a policy decision: "We must do what is in our power to protect British life andd property when in danger, but any action we take should be strictly limited to this purpose ... "[20] In a subsequent despatch Grey clarified this and stated more specifically what Britain's hopes and aims were in the Chinese crisis:[21]

> "I hoped that the outcome of things in China would be a Chinese Government that would make China stronger, and conduct her affairs free from outside diplomatic interference. Such a government would not only be recognized by us but would have our friendship and any support that we could usefully give. We wished to see a strong Chinese Government that would keep the open door for trade. It was indifferent to us by whom this government was constituted."

These were Jordan's directives: as far as overt action was involved Britain must at all times preserve an attitude of absolute non-interference.

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[17] Jordan to Campbell, 14 October 1911 (private) FO 350/7. He again gave an evaluation of Li and the rebel forces.

[18] Jordan, ibid.

[19] Campbell to Jordan, 20 October 1911 (private) FO 350/1.

[20] F.O. tel. Jordan 16 October, 1911, FO 371/1093, and communicated to MacDonald in Tokyo, 26 Oct. 1911, FO 371/1094.

[21] F.O. to Jordan, 14 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1095.

But this did not mean that the Legation in Peking or the Consuls scattered around the important Yangtze cities could not indirectly undertake to advance the cause of one side or the other, or to help limit the area and duration of the hostilities between the North and South. By the beginning of November, Jordan had come to the conclusion that the plight of the Manchus was extremely serious, and that the tacit support of Yüan Shih-k'ai offered the best hope of a settlement that was acceptable to the Chinese as well as to British interests in China.

The desperate situation of the Manchus was constantly on Jordan's mind. He observed that the ruling dynasty was largely discredited among its own people, and that there was no public sympathy with their cause.[22] The worst feature as it appeared to him was the depression he saw among the Manchu dignitaries in Peking. Prince Ch'ing was found busy converting his treasure into gold bars, "as being more portable in flight."[23] The two brothers of the Regent had sent their families away to a retreat in the hills.[24] While this was a pitiable state for the Manchus to be in, Jordan nevertheless found their defeatist attitude contemptible. "The Princes, Na-t'ung and others, who have been attempting to run the Empire for the last three years, spend their time in tears and are all ready to decamp at a moment's notice. Even in Corea at its worst I have never seen such craven helplessness and want of manhood."[25] A few days later, when Na-t'ung asked Jordan in despair if he could make any suggestion to save the Dynasty, Jordan regretted that"I was able to give him little consolation,"[26] and felt instead that perhaps Na-t'ung was responsible

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[22] Jordan despatch of 16 Oct. 1911, 371/1094.

[23] Jordan to Campbell, 23 October 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[24] ibid.

[25] Jordan to Campbell, 3 Nov. 1911 (private) ibid.

[26] Jordan to Campbell, 8 Nov. 1911 (private) ibid.

more than anyone else for the pass which things had now reached.[27]

As the Manchus displayed such inability to influence the situation in China, all attention was now focused on the activities and intentions of Yüan Shih-k'ai. This was no difficult task for Sir John Jordan, taking into consideration the keen interest he had always shown in the fortunes of Yüan since the early days of their friendship in Korea. On 14 October Yüan was appointed by special decree Viceroy of Hu-kuang and asked to proceed immediately to the post. Jordan was hopeful that as a result, "the present revolt will be suppressed."[28] Yet Yüan, being the astute politician that he was, and relishing the idea of being appealed to for help by the Prince Regent who had so ignominiously dismissed him in 1909, now delayed obeying the summons while assessing the situation and his own powers of manoeuvre. His tardiness in answering the call caused some misgivings in Peking, and it was the contention of Yüan's son that in the interval Yüan's name was being utilized by the Regent to insure loyalty of the Northern Army.[29] Grey chose to conclude from this information that "This all points to the care in giving any ... support to the Chinese Government."[30] Jordan decided to do nothing until Yüan's arrival on the scene.[31]

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[27] ibid.

[28] Jordan to F.O. 16 Oct. 1911, FO 371/1094.

[29] This was related to Jordan by Yüan's son on 20 October, in Jordan's tel. to F.O. 21 Oct. 1911 (confidential) FO 371/1093.

[30] Grey's minutes on the above. The reason for Yüan's reluctance to proceed to Hankow was his demand for direct control of at least a portion of the expeditionary forces in the area, while what the Regent feared was "his coming back to Peking as dictator." Jordan to Campbell, 23 Oct. 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[31] Jordan tel. F.O. 29 Oct. 1911 FO 371/1094. See a recent study of the subject, by Kit-ching Lau, "Sir John Jordan and the Affairs of China, 1906-1916, with special reference to the 1911 Revolution and Yüan Shih-k'ai" unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1967, especially Chapters 2 and 3.

The end of October saw a number of important cities falling into the hands of the revolutionaries. On 27 October Yüan was further appointed Imperial Commissioner to deal with the crisis. Jordan applauded the move, "No man could be better fitted to play the role of mediator between the Chinese people, of whom he is the most trusted living representative, and the Manchu Dynasty, whom he and his family have served for several generations."[32] On 30 October came two remarkable edicts, couched in penitential language, one of which condemned the Manchus for the calamity brought upon the country, and the other excluded all princes of the blood from holding offices of state. On 1 November, another edict appointed Yüan Prime Minister, with powers to form a new Cabinet.[33] These measures offered conclusive evidence that Yüan was now clearly the only element in the situation worthy of British support, and Jordan would see to it that the Foreign Office acted accordingly.

To begin with, Jordan noted that the announcement of Yüan's appointment did have an immediate tranquilising effect in the capital, and the exodus of Peking residents since mid-October, which had reached about a quarter of the whole population, was markedly decreasing.[34] He felt that Britain had acted wisely in 1909 in protesting against the dismissal of Yüan: "We put our money on the right horse at that time, and had the Regent only listened to British and American advice he might have been spared the deep humiliation he is now suffering."[35] Sir Edward Grey agreed: "There seemed however to be one good man on the side opposed to the revolutionaries, Yüan Shih-k'ai, whom we all respected and under whom we believed China was progressing until the Manchu Dynasty dismissed him."[36] It appeared to be a simple matter now, to work out a solution for the

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[32] Jordan to F.O. 30 Oct. 1911 FO 371/1095.

[33] The edicts are given in Jordan to F.O. 6 Nov. 1911, ibid: and "Wu-ch'ang ch'i-i Ch'ing-fang tang-an" in HHKM V, 302-4.

[34] Jordan to Campbell, 3 Nov. 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[35] ibid.

[36] Grey to Jordan, 14 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1095.

Chinese crisis provided that agreement could be reached among Yüan Shih-k'ai, the Manchu Court and the Southern revolutionaries as to the nature and leadership of the government that would succeed the Manchu Dynasty. In reality that proviso proved to be an almost insurmountable obstacle to peace.

Yüan Shih-k'ai reached Peking on 13 November, and immediately consulted with the British Legation as to what form of government would best gain Britain's support. On the 14th, as a feeler to test British reactions to some of his intentions, Yüan sent his son to see Jordan. The son announced that Yüan's natural desire was loyalty towards the Manchus, but that because of the strong public opinion against the Dynasty, he had to abandon any thought of retaining the Manchu Dynasty in its original form. Yüan had been approached by Li Yüan-hung and the other Southern leaders who promised him support if he would become the president of a Chinese Republic. But the son testified that this would be at variance with Yüan's own admitted preference for a full constitutional government with the retention of the Manchu Dynasty as a figure-head.[37] Yüan now wanted to know how Jordan felt. In reply Jordan admitted that among foreign Powers the general belief was that the Chinese did not seem to be fitted for a republican form of government, and therefore the suggestion of a constitutional monarchy under the nominal sovereignty of the Manchus would be the best solution. To this the son stated that "A republic would be only a transitional stage, and that his father might be acclaimed Emperor. The rebels wanted him to be their ruler."[38] Grey's response to

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[37] Yüan's son to Jordan, in Jordan tel. to F.O. 2 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1094. The Foreign Office found his suggestion entirely agreeable. Campbell: "(This) offers probably the best chance of an early solution" ibid.

[38] The conversation between Jordan and the younger Yüan is recorded in Jordan tel. F.O. 14 Nov. 1911 (very confidential) FO 371/1095. The last remark regarding Yüan's hitherto unknown aspirations to the empire evoked astonishment at the Foreign Office. MaxMüller commented, "This is strangely at variance with Sun Yat-sen's story" and Campbell agreed, "Entirely." ibid.

Yüan's trial balloon was typically cautious and non-committal: "His previous record has given us very friendly feelings and respect for him personally. What we desire to see as the outcome of the revolution is a government strong enough to deal impartially with foreign trade in China. We should give all diplomatic support we could to a government that would make this policy effective."[39]

Duly instructed, Jordan met with Yüan on 15 November. Once again the Premier declared his own preference for a limited monarchy in China, but he found the Southern revolutionaries intent on driving out the Manchus and establishing a republic. Yüan indicated that in the end he might have to form the nucleus of a government in the North which would then eventually either gain over the South, or recover it by force of arms. But he made it clear to Jordan that his task was not an easy one: the Empire was broken up into a number of disjointed units, his former associates were scattered and disinclined to join him; and most of all the treasury was empty and he could not pay his troops upon whose loyalty all depended. His specific request from the British government, however, was in the nature of some English statesman to act not as an adviser, but as a friend, to assist him in his colossal task.[40] Grey was alert to Yüan's plea for an English "friend" instead of "adviser" and would not make any promises.[41] Jordan was even more concerned with Yüan's

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[39]Grey tel. Jordan, 15 Nov. 1911 (in Grey's own draft) ibid.

[40]Jordan tel. F.O. 15 Nov. 1911, ibid.

[41]Grey minutes, ibid. Yüan did obtain an English adviser later, in the person of Morrison of the London Times. By then he was in a consolidated position, as President of the Chinese Republic, and his choice of Morrison was generally approved by the Foreign Office. See C. Pearl, op.cit. 257,272-4, and F.O. correspondence in FO 371/1346.

talk of civil war, and was not too happy when Yüan, pressed, insisted that his policy was "one of conciliation backed by such force as he could command ... "[42]

Jordan was frankly disappointed after this interview with Yüan, who did not strike him as having reached any definite policy decisions, though what the British Minister expected to hear given the chaotic circumstances at the time is hard to imagine. "The impression I gathered from a long talk ... was that Yüan will watch events and do whatever the country requires him to do. He may champion the Manchu cause for a time, but his advocacy must be rather lukewarm at the best. Many of his friends are anxious for his safety, and I think that his end will be assassination."[43]

The Japanese Attitude

Whatever Jordan thought of Yüan Shih-k'ai and his vague intentions, British reactions to the revolutionary situation was bound to be influenced by Japan's response to the revolution, by virtue of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and Grey's insistence on concerted action among the Powers. For all the activity of Japanese agents and military instructors an the Chinese revolutionary organization, Japan was as much surprised by the outbreak of the Revolution as the other Powers. It was soon evident however, that though the Japanese Government had very little liking for Yüan Shih-k'ai, it had an even greater aversion to the establishment of a republican form of government in China, so close to its own borders. To prevent such an eventuality, the Japanese Government was often moved to intervene actively in China, only to be restrained

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[42] Jordan to Campbell, 17 Nov. 1911, (private) FO 350/7.

[43] ibid. Jordan proved to be more of a prophet than he realized, as an assassination attempt was indeed made on Yüan on 16 January, 1912.

by its ally Great Britain. For a time Japanese policy wavered between support for the revolutionaries and for the Manchus, between ambition to reap political profits in the situation and timidity when faced with disapproval at home and abroad. The Japanese finally resorted to supplying clandestine help to both sides in the Chinese struggle, and ended up being criticised by all factions.[44] The first reports in Japan regarding the outbreak of the Chinese Revolution revealed the confusion and disparate reactions among the populace and government. Some thought the movement would be quickly suppressed while others took a more gloomy view of the future. Commercial interests feared for the loss of trade if the disturbances spread, while others dreaded the outbreak of another anti-foreign movement. Most Japanese were concerned with the safety of the lives and property of their compatriots in China, while some elements were already hinting at Japan's ability to supply the two contending sides in China with material and funds.[45]

By December, 1911, the Japanese Government was ready to approach the British Foreign Office with a suggestion to deal with the Chinese situation. The Charge d'Affaires, Yamaza Enjiro, on 1 December communicated to Sir Edward Grey the views of the Japanese Government. The document first made the observation that the situation was worsening day by day, that the revolutionary camp was divided, and that Yüan did not seem to be able to cope. It was therefore necessary for the Powers interested in China "not to maintain any longer an attitude of mere onlookers, but that it is essential for them to take proper

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[44] Japan's response to the Revolution is discussed in M.B. Jansen, The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen (Cambridge, Mass. 1954) 131-53; A. M. Pooley, Japan's Foreign Policies (New York 1920) 69-74; V. Chirol, "The Chinese Revolution" in Quarterly Review Vol. 216, No. 43 (Apr. 1912) 552-3; A.L.P. Dennis, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance (California 1934) 41-2; T. Iyenaga, "China, the new Republic" in The World's Work, XIX, 114 (May 1912) 599-608; Masaru Ikei, "Japanese response to the Chinese Revolution of 1911" in Journal of Asian Studies XXV, 2 (Feb. 1966) 213-27.

[45] A summary of the Japanese press on the subject of the Revolution is provided by MacDonald, 17 October 1911, FO 371/1094.

measures with a view to safeguarding their interests as soon as possible ... "[46] The communiqué continued to emphasize that the basic cause of trouble in China was the uncertainty regarding the future form of government. "In the opinion of the Japanese Government, not only is in principle a republican system impracticable in China in view of her traditional conditions, but under the present circumstances she cannot be considered as prepared to put the idea into practice."[47] Japan's proposal at this time was therefore that the Powers should use their efforts to establish in China "a government practically by the Chinese, but under the nominal sovereignty of the Manchu Dynasty."[48]

It is well to remember that at this stage such a form of government, a limited constitutional monarchy under nominal Manchu sovereignty, was regarded by both Jordan and Yüan as being the best and only solution. Yüan had made known his views as early as 2 November, when his son informed Jordan that Yüan's wish was "to establish a full constitutional government with the retention of the Manchu Dynasty."[49] Jordan had agreed, and had noted that as there was no one element in the situation which could replace the dynasty, its retention as a figurehead would undoubtedly be the practical solution, and he had felt that Yüan would "honestly try to keep it on its legs."[50] A week later Jordan had reiterated, "I must say the prospect of a Chinese Republic frightens me as likely to lead to endless friction and internal dissensions."[51]

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[46] Yamaza to Grey, 1 Dec. 1911, FO 371/1096; also communicated to Jordan by Ijuin, 5 Dec. 1911 (confidential) FO 371/1098.

[47] ibid.

[48] ibid.

[49] Jordan tel. F.O. 2 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1094.

[50] Jordan to Campbell, 3 Nov. 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[51] Jordan to Campbell, 19 Nov. 1911 (private) ibid.

Thus when the Yamaza communication came to the British Government, it would seem that Japan and Britain were both working towards the same objective in China. Yet the British were concerned at the hint of intervention in the wording of the Japanese proposals. F.O. Lindley thought, "I do not see how the Japanese view is to be imposed (on both opposing parties) without the possibility of active intervention. It is more than probable that if a view is imposed from outside, the solution will not be a satisfactory one ... "[52] Jordan too had the same doubts and fears:[53]

> "Any agreement among the Powers for the maintenance of the dynasty in its present form would be very unpopular in the country, and would entail upon the Powers which became parties thereto serious responsibilities. They would be regarded as champions of an effete regime against the declared wishes of half the country, and that the more intelligent half. They would have to be prepared if necessary to coerce the South into accepting their programme and would presumably make themselves responsible for the observance of the constitution by the Throne. In practice this would probably require the exercise of constant pressure which would give the Japanese and Russians, in virtue of their military proximity, an undesirable measure of tutelage over the Court .... Intervention is in my opinion a measure to which we should have recourse only in the last resort ... "

To Sir Francis Campbell all this talk of intervention seemed to suggest sinister motives on the part of the Japanese. He wanted to know, "Do you think they have any particular axe to grind, or are they merely anxious for the re-establishment of a normal state of things?.... One feels inclined to be a little suspicious ... "[54] Jordan quite understood the unease at the Foreign Office, but drawing on his knowledge of the Japanese, he was at this time disposed to give them credit for a sincere desire to see

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[52] Lindley memorandum, on Yamaza to Grey, 1 Dec. 1911, FO 371/1096.

[53] Jordan tel. F.O. 3 Dec. 1911, ibid.

[54] Campbell to Jordan, 2 Dec. 1911 (private) FO 350/1.

a peaceful settlement. What he objected to was their tendency "to push matters ahead of my instructions and to commit us to a definite policy ... "[55] But as with the Japanese, Jordan admitted, "I have no faith in a republican form of government proving workable in China, where fully ninety per cent of the population neither read nor write, and care not how they are ruled so long as they are allowed to do their daily work in peace."[56] Nevertheless there was a very real difference between the British and Japanese policies, in the extent to which they were prepared to go to prevent the establishment of republicanism in China. "I do not know how far the Japanese would be prepared to use coercion in forcing the republicans to accept a limited monarchy, but it would I conceive be very difficult for us to join them in such a policy. It would alienate the whole population of the South and cause intense annoyance to the Chinese settlers in Hongkong and Singapore."[57]

Thus Britain's neutrality in the Chinese Revolution was to be clearly and consistently adhered to, in the face of recurring attempts by the Japanese to drag them into some form of intervention. Sir Edward Grey explained the position to the United States Chargé d'Affaires, James Bryce:[58]

> "The opinion of those who knew China best was that some kind of monarchy be best suited to the country; but, I had felt a policy of non-intervention between the contending parties the only one that was wise. To side with the North in favour of a monarchy might precipitate a separation of the South in the form of a republic, and it was desirable if possible, to avoid such a separation. In the next place, foreigners hitherto have been untouched. British subjects are distributed over China. It was important to protect them all if attacks were made upon them, and if we sided with one part of China it would lead to attacks upon our subjects in another part. It seemed therefore to me that it was still as true as it ever had been that in the interests of the unity of China and the safety of our own subjects we must avoid intervention."

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[55] Jordan to Campbell, 20 Dec. 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[56] ibid.

[57] ibid.

[58] Grey to Bryce, 23 Jan 1912, FO 371/1312.

British Public Opinion

During the initial shock of the Revolution, there were not wanting voices from among the English population at home and in China urging the government to take active steps on behalf of one faction or the other in China. A typical reaction from those Britons who had some knowledge and experience of China was the plea sent to the Foreign Office by Charles J. H. Holcombe, speaking as an honorary member of the "Chinese Reform Party," and as a member of the "Friends of China Society" founded in London by Dr. James Cantlie in 1898. Holcombe emphasized that the leaders of the revolutionary movement in China were Christian converts and hence friends of the English nation. In his opinion the Chinese people were not naturally antagonistic to foreigners, but were only rendered so on occasion by the misleading propaganda of the Manchu government. Thus it would be folly for Britain to take the side of the Manchu Dynasty in the present struggle. "The insurgents entertain the best feelings towards us, but to intervene at this critical juncture would not only be fatal to their cause but also to the continued supremacy of British trade in West and South China, this being a national and long-premeditated uprising of the hereditary Chinese against a corrupt administration."[59]

It is interesting to note that the London Times seemed to have premonitions of such appeals on behalf of the revolutionaries, for it warned early in October that though the temptation to intervene must be considerable, the Powers should bear in mind that "any such action would not only be indefensible in itself but would obviously involve great danger to international peace ... "[60] Nonetheless a general survey of the opinions of scholars and writers in England revealed a good deal of sympathy for the revolutionary cause

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[59] Holcombe to Grey, 18 Oct. 1911 (private) FO 371/1093.

[60] Times, 14 Oct. 1911, p.7 col. 3-4, leader; see also the North China Herald, 21 Oct. 1911, p.125, col. 1-3, leader.

in China. A common feature among all the comments elicited was the genuine hope that the Revolution would mean a greatly reformed China for the future, Manchu corruption and inefficiency having by this time become a rallying cry for all those who spoke about China.[61] One of the strongest pleas for British intervention came from an anonymous correspondent of the North China Herald who argued that on the grounds of British self-interest, China's need for outside assistance and the advantages to be reaped from such action, Britain should assume an active role in the Revolution.[62] Yet another source of protest against British neutrality involved the support the government seemed to be giving to Yüan Shih-k'ai, whose role in crushing the 1898 reform programme would immediately alienate him from the reformers among the Southern ranks. "The future of the country is with the men who are revolutionaries .... "[63]

The situation was somewhat different for the British consular officials scattered among the cities of China. They were more directly involved with protecting British lives and property, and so tended to advocate strong policies when it came to dealing with elements disruptive of peace and order. The Consul in Shanghai watched with growing apprehension as the city fell to the rebels early in November, and suggested that should the latter fail to maintain some form of administration in the city, and especially in the foreign settlements, foreign military intervention should be resorted to.[64] Even Jordan

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[61]The London and China Express on 20 October, 1911, and 3 November, published collections of interviews with prominent figures, including Geo. Jamieson of the China Association, Arthur Diosy, a friend of Sun Yat-sen's, and Dr. H. A. Giles of Cambridge University.

[62]North China Herald 18 Nov. 1911, p.464-5.

[63]This came from J. Ross, 23 Dec. 1911 (private) FO 371/1098.

[64]Jordan tel. Grey, 7 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1094. Parliament debated the question the following day. See the Parliamentary Debates of 8 Nov. 1911, vol. 30, p. 1631-2.

had to concede that if a general massacre by the Imperial troops should occur in Peking, the diplomatic corps would be justified in intervening in the situation.[65] This however was the only occasion on which Jordan allowed his concern for the safety of foreign lives to indicate a momentary deviation from his stand of strict neutrality. A few days later, a delegation of three republicans called on him and pressed for British influence in effecting the withdrawal of the Manchu garrison from Peking and the retirement of the Court to Jehol, as prerequisites for peace talks. Jordan stood firm and told them it was out of the question.[66] By December, it was also becoming clear to the Japanese that there was little hope of getting the British to acquiesce to any form of open intervention, and Sir Claude MacDonald reported from Tokyo that they were willing to take no other steps other than those in cooperation with Britain and the other Powers.[67]

One inherent difficulty in the observance of neutrality in the revolutionary situation in China was whether to afford the rebels the status of belligerents. This was especially complex for Britain in view of the wide diversity of Englishmen involved in commercial, missionary, educational and other pursuits in China. The problem was first raised in Changsha and Ichang, which had fallen to the revolutionaries on 21 and 22 October respectively. The government's instructions to the Consul-General at Hankow was to communicate

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[65] Jordan tel. F.O. 12 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1095. The Foreign Office, however, was fairly reluctant to consent, see MaxMüller's minutes on the above, ibid: "Any use of force by the employment of the small Legation guards would entail great risk and might lead to great complications."

[66] Jordan tel. F.O. 20 Nov. 1911, ibid.

[67] MacDonald tel. F.O. 7 Dec. 1911, FO 371/1096. MacDonald revealed confidentially however, that the Japanese were still convinced that the revolutionary party was not as strong and united as they would seem, and that the country was still in favour of a monarchy. The Japanese were soon to make another bid at interference.

with the rebel leaders regarding matters such as contraband of war, but on no account to recognise them as belligerents and thus entitled to the rights of war.[68] But with regard to Hankow itself, the very seat of the revolutionary movement, the matter was not so easily defined. There the consular body had daily discussions with the military government of Li Yüan-hung in matters concerning the ordinary administration of the city and the foreign community. It would have been far more convenient for the British Consul to regard the revolutionaries as belligerents and deal with them officially. Jordan however, was firm and realised that any recognition of the rebel government would justify a protest from Peking.[69] Nevertheless the question was brought up repeatedly as the revolutionaries continued to expand their influence in the central provinces. In actual fact, the military governments in many provinces had already been exercising unofficially most of the rights of belligerents, such as searching vessels for contraband, firing on merchant ships, seizing cargoes meant for the Imperialists, and so on.[70] The whole situation in short was anomalous, and Lindley suggested, "it will soon become a question whether it would not be more convenient to recognise the rebels as belligerents."[71] Such a step of course, would involve consulting with Japan and the other Powers, and the Foreign Office would much rather leave matters as it stood, since the revolutionaries appeared to be satisfied and the Imperialists were not dissatisfied.[72] The issue was thus never clearly defined, and the British

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[68] Jordan tel. F.O. 22 Oct. 1911, FO 371/1093.

[69] Jordan to F.O. 8 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1096. Campbell agreed: "I certainly do not think we should formally recognise the rebels at Hankow as belligerents."

[70] The details are given in Jordan to F.O. 28 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1097.

[71] Lindley minutes on the above, ibid.

[72] Langley minutes on the above, ibid.

Consuls dealt with specific incidents as they occurred from day to day.[73]

By December 1911, British policy in the Revolution seemed to have achieved a certain degree of stability. British neutrality was clearly established and recognised, the ambitious plans of Japan for interference were temporarily checked, and the way seemed clear for Britain to play a part in initiating negotiations between Yüan Shih-K'ai and the Republicans. Yet before actual peace talks could begin, there were still two basic issues unresolved: a decision regarding the form of government to succeed the Ch'ing Dynasty, and the problem of financing Yüan Shih-k'ai.

The Debate over the Form of Government

As far as the form of government was concerned, there was never any doubt that Britain had always been in favour of a monarchy in China. There were too many reasons to argue why the Chinese were best adapted to a monarchical system, and far too few guarantees that a republic would work.[74] We have seen

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[73] In mid December, when the North-South negotiations were under way, the Foreign Office was able to stand firm in its policy of not recognising the revolutionaries, despite appeals from the British Consul at Shanghai. The reason was that the revolutionaries, by their recalcitrant demands for a republic, were causing a deadlock in the negotiations, and the British Government did not feel inclined to "reward them for their unreasonableness by a recognition of their belligerency ..." Jordan to F.O. 4 Jan. 1912, FO 371/1311, and the attached minutes.

[74] Even Sir Henry Blake, a former supporter of the reform movement in China, now felt that provincial and regional differences in the vast Chinese Empire were too deep-seated to allow for any political unity which a successful republic would require. " ... new wine fermenting in old bottles has yet to produce certain definitions that are unsettled ... " he wrote in "Will China break up?" in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. 70 (Dec. 1911) 1105-6, also quoted in the London and China Express, 8 Dec. 1911, p. 873 col. 1-2 The North China Herald of 18 Nov. 1911, p. 415-6, noted "A republic is a delicate and capricious instrument even in the most highly educated countries. In China it must be deemed an impossibility ... practically it would mean a new tyranny." The Times of 14 Nov. 1911 p. 5 col. 1 also observed, " ... there is no doubt that sober Chinese are beginning to realize that the republican ideal is utterly impracticable ..." The former military attache at Peking, Colonel George

that Jordan himself has stated constantly that his own preference was for a limited constitutional monarchy under Manchu sovereignty. Late in November, when the three republican delegates came to seek British support, Jordan had spent the better part of an hour "trying to prove to them the risky nature of the experiment (of republicanism) and imploring them as an old friend of China to lose no time in settling their differences."[75] Again during an interview with Yüan, Jordan gave it as his personal opinion that he could never recommend the adoption of a republic because he felt the country was unsuited for this type of control.[76]

And yet it became increasingly clear that the Southern revolutionaries would accept nothing less than the total elimination of the Manchus and the establishment of a republican form of government. It was then that the Foreign Office began to cast around for an alternative to the dilemma. The scheme was broached by Sir John McLeavy Brown, Councillor at the Chinese Legation. He suggested that as the Manchus seemed to be the sole target of the revolutionaries, more than the institution of monarchy, there was available a living descendent of Confucius who could be made to found a new Chinese dynasty.[77] Jordan was

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Periera in his memorandum on the Chinese Revolution, stated categorically that the political indifference and general apathy of the Chinese population only fitted them to a monarchical system of government, as the "large bulk of the people are far happier and more contented when they are ignorant of better things .... " The Periera memorandum, 6 Apr. 1913, FO 371/1623. The question is also dealt with by Archibald Colquhoun, "China a republic?" in Fortnightly Review, New Series, XC (1911) 1032-43, and Sir Frederick Whyte, China and the Foreign Powers (Oxford 1928) 14-6.

[75] Jordan to Campbell, 10 Dec. 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[76] Jordan to Grey, 28 Dec. 1911, FO 371/1310.

[77] Campbell to Jordan, 8 Dec. 1911 (private) FO 350/1. I have not been able to find any biographical details regarding this descendent of Confucius, but a report by the British Consul-General at Nanking contains the information that this "Duke K'ung" was a colourless man over fifty years of age, and representative of a conservative caste. He had spent his life in Shantung secluded from foreign influences, and would therefore not be a good choice as emperor of a reformed and progressive China. See Jordan to F.O. 4 Jan. 1912, FO 371/1311.

consulted, and was asked to solicit Yüan's opinion. Yüan did not think the person would carry sufficient weight to restore order and maintain the unity of the country.[78] The Japanese too, when approached, thought the idea "somewhat fantastic."[79] With that the plan was abandoned, though Lindley still failed to see why Yüan did not seize on the scheme as a compromise measure at least.[80]

When it was evident that the Republicans were determined not to concede any of their objectives, and when even Yüan began to show signs of weakening towards the republican cause, Jordan realised that Britain's best course was to continue supporting Yüan's position while officially remaining neutral. The question of arranging loans for Yüan and the Peking government thus came to the fore.

The Financial Question

Soon after the outbreak of the Revolution it was obvious that Peking was in dire financial straits, at a time when it was important to have sufficient funds to pay the Imperial troops who would maintain order in the North. On 17 October, 1911, the Wai-wu Pu informed Jordan that the Chinese Government felt obliged to appeal to the Powers for a temporary postponement of indemnity payments.[81] The next day the Board of Posts and Communications applied for a loan of 500,000 taels from the four financial groups (British, American, German and French). The representatives of the three latter Powers

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[78] F.O. tel. Jordan, 15 Dec. 1911 (secret) FO 371/1097, and Jordan to F.O. 18 Dec. 1911 (secret) FO 371/1310.

[79] ibid.

[80] Lindley minutes on Jordan tel. F.O. 21 Dec. 1911, FO 371/1098. Another reason why the British Government decided not to mention the subject again was expressed by Walter Langley, "As we have reason to believe that Yüan's ambition was to found a dynasty, there would be some danger of our losing his goodwill if the first suggestion of any other candidate for the sovereignty were to come from us ... " Langley minutes on Jordan's tel. of 15 Dec. 1911, FO 371/1097.

[81] Jordan tel. F.O. 18 Oct. 1911 (confidential) FO 371/1093.

were ready to assist the Chinese Government immediately, but Jordan alone demurred, and wished to delay a reply till they had all consulted their home governments.[82] The British Government in fact was caught unprepared by this new test of neutrality. At first it was thought that a foreign loan by the four Power Consortium would seem a better solution to the Chinese financial question than agreeing to a postponement of indemnity payments. A loan would be more effective in assisting the speedy restoration of order and would not involve "the direct support by His Majesty's Government of the corrupt and effete Chinese Government which never does anything."[83] Yet Campbell knew that the issue was neither so simple nor superficial. On the one hand it could be argued that the Manchu government was so effete and inefficient that it was hopeless trying to keep them on their legs. On the other hand it was certainly to the interest and convenience of the British government to have a sound government with whom to deal, and the Manchus were better than no government at all. But more important at this stage of the Revolution, there was also the question of security. The Southern revolutionaries had recently announced that they would recognise all the past loans and agreements made by Peking, but not new ones. The fear was thus that a new loan would be repudiated by the revolutionaries should they gain total control of the new government.[84] This was in short the whole dilemma of Britain's trying to avoid

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[82] Jordan tel. F.O. 18 Oct. 1911 ibid. An account of the formation of the four-Power Banking Consortium in 1910 and its subsequent activities is found in W.W. Willoughby, Foreign Rights and Interests in China (Baltimore 1927) II 1030-46; see also W. Levi, Modern China's Foreign Policy (Minneapolis 1953) 124-36; H. Croly, Willard Straight (New York 1924); F. Field, American Participation in the China Consortium (Chicago 1931) 34-54; L. Graves, "Willard Straight in Far Eastern Finance" in Asia, XXI, 2 (Feb. 1921) 160-66; Liu Ping-lin, Chin-tai Chung-kuo wai-chiao shih-kao (Peking 1962) Part II.

[83] MaxMüller minutes on Jordan tel. F.O. 18 Oct. 1911, FO 371/1093.

[84] Campbell minutes, ibid.

antagonising both sides in the Revolution. As Jordan saw it, the choice was simply one between chaos and boycotts. The government at Peking would not last long without money, and if not paid the troops would turn to brigandage, resulting in an upheaval which would upset whatever semblance of government was left. The alternative, supplying Peking with loans, would incur the anger of the South and the risk of a boycott of British trade in those centres of revolutionary fervour, such as Hongkong, Canton and Shanghai, where British merchants were bound to suffer.[85] The financial question, more than anything else, was to prove a real yard-stick of British determination to preserve its neutral stand in the Revolution.

On 19 October, 1911, the loan application to the four Groups was raised to 2,000,000 taels, and the Chinese Ministry of Finance further applied for a loan of 10,000,000 taels. The sheer amount of these needs made it essential, in Jordan's view, that the four Powers should take careful stock of the situation before deciding on a common policy. His personal prediction was that compliance with the request would in future entail some form of international control of the finances of China.[86] It was obvious to the Foreign Office that Jordan, despite his guarded language, did not approve of the Powers supplying the loans: "Financial control sounds very nice but the difficulties of carrying it into effect in China would be enormous."[87] Campbell agreed: "China is already unable to find money for the indemnity loan ... and to go on piling up debt in this way must mean financial ruin unless there is international

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[85] Jordan to Campbell, 10 Dec. 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[86] Jordan tel. F.O. 19 Oct. 1911, FO 371/1093.

[87] MaxMuller minutes, ibid.

control."[88] Sir Edward Grey followed Jordan's lead and decided: "As at present advised, I am opposed to lending money."[89]

Be that as it may, Britain, being a member of the Consortium, was not entirely free to act independently of the other Powers. There was reason to believe that both France and the United States were applying pressure on Jordan through their representatives at Peking, for compliance with the Chinese demands.[90] This would explain Jordan's telegram of 21 October, in which he seemed to have softened his opposition to the loans, by arguing that since the revolutionary troubles originated in the railway dispute, it gave the Chinese government "a moral claim to our support and with all its faults it is probably no worse than any administration which is likely to take its place. It cannot possibly go on without financial assistance ..."[91] Thus to protect whatever loans Britain and the Powers would give to the Chinese Government, Jordan proposed a set of guarantees to which the Chinese must agree. The safeguards were to include a foreign supervisor in the principal spending departments in Peking and the provinces, and Chinese promises to cease forthwith obstructing river conservancy measures and to place a reformed government in power in Peking. Jordan realized, "These may seem counsels of perfection, but nothing short of drastic measures will meet the situation."[92] In their private correspondence, Jordan tries to justify his

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[88] Campbell minutes, ibid.

[89] Grey minutes, ibid.

[90] The French Charge d'Affaires at Peking frankly admitted to Jordan that the object of his government was to hasten international control in China. See Jordan tel. F.O. 24 Oct. 1911 (confidential) FO 371/1093. The United States interests were represented by Willard Straight, whose aim was to bolster the Chinese Government and save the currency loan on which is reputation rested. See H. Croly, op.cit. 378; A.W. Griswold, The Far Eastern Policy of the United States (New York 1938, reissued Jan. 1962) 136-71; F.R. Dulles, China and America (New Jersey 1946) 139-40; L. Graves, "Willard Straight and the Revolution in Peking" in Asia, XXI, 4 (1921) 337-40.

[91] Jordan tel. F.O. 21 Oct. 1911 FO 371/1093.

[92] ibid.

"drastic measures" to Campbell. He explained that he was forced to formulate these conditions by the consideration that if they really had to finance the Chinese Government, "I cannot see there is much difference between a state and an individual, and no one in private life would lend money to a person who was at the end of his resources and not competent to look after his affairs."[93] Fortunately for Jordan at this juncture, the other three Powers failed to agree on the exact terms for a loan to the Chinese Government,[94] and Grey decided on a wait-and-see policy to watch developments in the revolutionary and financial situation.[95]

The government at Peking meanwhile took the initiative in two developments. On 25 October the Wai-wu Pu suddenly announced that they wished to drop the proposal to postpone the indemnity payments.[96] This was a surprise to the Powers concerned, as the Chinese Government was in as desperate a financial position as a week earlier when the postponement was requested. Grey suspected, correctly as it turned out, that Peking was really more interested in a loan, and feared that the Powers would agree to the postponement of the indemnity payments as an alternative to a loan.[97] Then on 30 October it was discovered that the Chinese government had approached a private Franco-Belgium-English banking group, represented by a Frenchman Baron Henri Cottu, for a loan of 150,000,000 francs.[98] Such a move was naturally viewed with much displeasure

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[93] Jordan to Campbell, 23 Oct. 1911 (private) FO 350/7.

[94] Telegrams from Washington, 24 October, Paris, 26 October, and Berlin, 27 October, 1911 FO 371/1093.

[95] F.O. to MacDonald, 26 Oct. 1911 FO 371/1094.

[96] Jordan tel. F.O. 25 Oct. 1911 FO 371/1093.

[97] Grey minutes, ibid.

[98] Jordan tel. F.O. 30 Oct. 1911, FO 371/1094. Cottu was associated with de Lesaps in the Panama Canal scheme, but the Foreign Office had no knowledge of who the English in it were. See Campbell minutes, ibid.

by the Powers, including Great Britain. Cottu called at the Foreign Office late in November, hoping to elicit a promise from the British government that they would not openly disavow the loan when it was negotiated. Grey refused.[99] By then, it was evident that there was very little financial support for the Cottu group, and the Foreign Office did not think anything was likely to come of it anyway.[100]

Meanwhile Jordan was more than ever convinced of the wisdom of not lending money to either side. His argument now was that either the Manchu Dynasty would fall amid confusion, or would remain in position but not in power. Thus the Powers were likely to be in a position to exercise a far more salutary and abiding influence if instead of supplying money to prolong the civil war, they reserved it for the use, under suitable guarantees, of whatever administration eventually emerged from the Revolution.[101] This was the most sensible observation to come out of the financial tangle, and the Foreign Office would adhere as far as possible to these principles.[102]

It was at this time, 2 November, that the four-Power Consortium was again approached for a loan, this time by the Chinese Government with the approval of the National Assembly. The British representative in the Group (the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation) now felt that, in view of the

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[99]Grey Memorandum, 24 Nov. 1911 FO 371/1091. His reply was, "If I was asked in public I should say that we have not given support or encouragement to any proposals for a loan."

[100]Campbell minutes, ibid. The Contract between Peking and Cottu was finally cancelled in December. The British Government had stood firm and refused any recognition of the loan, so the French Government informed Cottu that they could not permit his loans to be quoted on the Bourse, even though they were favourable to French industries. See Addis (of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank) to F.O. 30 Dec. 1911, FO 371/1318.

[101]Jordan tel. F.O. 3 Nov. 1911 (FO 371/1094).

[102]MaxMüller minutes, ibid.

approval of the National Assembly, the circumstances were substantially changed, and it might be desirable to take up the loan.[103] In actual fact, of course, the real motives behind the Group was fear of competition from the Cottu negotiations then in progress. Campbell was against the Group taking action, and Grey concurred, "This is no time to lend to the Chinese Government."[104] On 8 November the Group refused the Chinese application.[105]

The Peking Government was thus left entirely to its own devices as far as funds were concerned; the outlook was not hopeful. However, on 13 November Yüan Shih-k'ai arrived to assume the Prèmiership, and to Sir John Jordan at least, this gave the situation a totally different perspective. With the stabilizing effect of Yüan's presence in the capital, Jordan was disposed to a more sympathetic view of the financial difficulties of the Chinese Government. When it was learned that early in the month thirty-three boxes of gold bars from the Palace treasure hoarded by the Empress Dowager were handed over to the Ministry of Finance to defray government expenses, the urgency of the government's troubles was manifest. Jordan commented, "Nothing could more forcibly illustrate the dire financial straits of the situation than does this unprecedented use of Palace money for the needs of the Government."[106]

Then in December, a number of events occurred which led directly to a modification of Jordan's loan policy. On 3 December, the first truce between North and South was signed, and on 6 December the Regent abdicated.[107] The

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[103] Townsend to F.O. 3 Nov. 1911 ibid.

[104] Grey minutes, ibid.

[105] Addis to F.O. 11 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1095.

[106] Jordan to F.O., 16 Nov. 1911 (confidential) FO 371/1096.

[107] These will be dealt with in the following pages.

same day Yüan approached Sir Francis Aglen, Inspector of Customs who succeeded Sir Robert Hart in October 1911, to surrender some Customs funds earmarked for pension purposes (Aglen would rather resign than do so). "In these circumstances," wrote Jordan, "I can no longer withhold sanction to a temporary accommodation by the Groups, but to guard against possible boycott I would propose to inform Yüan that he could not have the money until it had been explained to the revolutionaries at Hankow and Shanghai that the advance was necessary in the interest of negotiations, and their acquiescence secured."[108] As will be seen, the truce and the subsequent negotiations were largely the result of Jordan's indirect role as intermediary between Yüan and the Southern republicans, so it was no surprise that he was prepared virtually to reverse his loan policy in order to prevent a renewal of hostilities, to keep the negotiations going, and to maintain as stable a government as possible in Peking with whom the republicans could negotiate. In short, Jordan was proposing to buy time to keep Yüan in a position to bargain with the republicans.

The government in London however, still entertained considerable doubts, which were only slightly dispelled by Jordan's suggestion to consult the revolutionaries before arranging a loan for Yüan. Campbell noted, " ... to make an advance to Yüan would be taking sides to some extent, whereas so far we had pronounced ourselves in favour of complete neutrality. However Sir John Jordan's proposal to obtain the assent of the rebels meets this difficulty, I think."[109] Grey was of the opinion that at least the acquiescence of the South must be a sine qua non before any loan proceedings should start.[110]

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[108] Jordan tel. F.O. 6 Dec. 1911 FO 371/1096.

[109] Campbell minutes, ibid.

[110] Grey minutes on Bertie tel. F.O. 9 Dec. 1911 FO 371/1097.

Even so, Jordan's plan soon ran into difficulties from several sides, and the situation was worse than ever by the end of December. The first indication of trouble came from the Japanese who though allied with Britain, were not represented in the four-Power Banking Consortium. When they learned of Jordan's latest loan designs the Japanese revealed that they were upset and disappointed: Britain had not consulted with them first before the proposal was made known, thus implying that they were to be excluded from participation in the proposed loan. The fact would create a very bad impression in Japan, "and throw her into the arms of Russia who ... had also been excluded."[111] The Foreign Office could see little reason why the Japanese should be so incensed, since they were not part of the Banking Consortium anyhow; it would hardly be fair to the Group Powers to defer consulting them until the Japanese had been informed.[112] What it all boiled down to, of course, was the fact that Japan merely wanted to participate in whatever loan activities the Powers were contemplating. Jordan even seemed to see an advantage in admitting the Japanese, " ... it appeared to me that the more Powers participate the better as this would distribute the responsibility of meeting a possible boycott."[113] Even so, the government still felt that in the circumstances it would be "for the Japanese to ask, and for us to inform our group that we do not object."[114]

Having placated the Japanese by an invitation to join in the proposed loan, Sir John Jordan was faced with an even louder outcry against his policy, this time from the republican representative Wu T'ing-fang (1842-1922). An angry telegram sent to the British Consul at Shanghai embodied the feelings of the South. "I am asked to beg the attention of His Majesty's Government

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[111] MacDonald tel. F.O. 10 Dec. 1911 FO 371/1097.

[112] Campbell minutes, ibid.

[113] Jordan tel. F.O. 11 Dec. ibid.

[114] Campbell minutes, ibid.

to the direct injury such a loan will do our cause, and the prolongation of misery and disturbance to trade that will surely result from any financial assistance to our enemies."[115] Although Wu had clearly misrepresentated the objects of such a loan, not to prolong the present struggle but rather to see it terminated by peaceful negotiations, Sir Edward Grey feared that no amount of explanation was likely to satisfy the Republicans.[116] Jordan's financial policy was doomed to failure. By mid-December, the diplomatic body at Peking realised that there was no chance of obtaining the acquiescence of the revolutionaries to the loan for Yüan Shih-k'ai, considering the temper of Wu's protests. Jordan was near despair, "If Chinese accounts can be believed, Yüan cannot go on without funds for more than a week at the outside, and the government here will then probably collapse."[117]

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[115]Telegram enclosed in Jordan tel. F.O. 11 Dec. ibid. Wu T'ing-fang was a Cantonese, born in Singapore. He received his early education in Hongkong, and worked for a time in the Legal Department of the local government. At the age of 33 he decided to make law his profession, and proceeded to further his special education in England, at Lincoln's Inn, from which he obtained the barrister's degree. He returned to practise in Hongkong, and married the sister of the eminent Hongkong doctor and barrister Ho Ch'i. His knowledge of European law and his brilliant practice in Hongkong soon came to the attention of the then Viceroy of Chihli Li Hung-chang, who offered him a lucrative post with the Governor-General Shen Pao-chen of Kiangsu, Kiangsi and Anhwei, to assist in the handling of foreign relations. In 1896 Wu was appointed Minister to the United States. In 1902 he returned to undertake Imperial legal reforms for the Ch'ing Government. The next year he was appointed Vice-President of the newly created Board of Trade, and in 1908 Wu served on the Board of Law, where he continued his reform programme. See Shen Yün-lung, Chin-tai cheng-chih jén-wu lun-ts'ung (Taipei 1965) 132-8; Wu Sheng-lin, Prominent Chinese of Hongkong, (Hongkong 1959).

[116]Grey minutes on Jordan's tel. 11 Dec. FO 371/1097.

[117]Jordan tel. F.O. 16 Dec. ibid.

Another reason why the loan activities were so quickly curtailed was the reluctance, strangely, of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, the British partner in the Consortium. The Bank maintained close ties with the merchants of the coastal cities, and at the first indication that the Southern revolutionaries would protest against the plan, they informed the Foreign Office of their opposition:[118]

> "Our opinion is we should not give loan to Yüan Shih-k'ai. Consider such action almost certain result in anti-foreign movement, most serious to foreign trade and residents .... Our opinion is solution of trouble will be effected sooner by withholding financial support from both sides... Strongly recommend Groups make no loan. British Con-General agrees with foregoing."

The possibility cannot be ruled out that Wu T'ing-fang and others probably had pressure brought to bear on the British mercantile communities.

In any case, the financial situation was more desperate than before, and most assuredly Britain had lost credit with the Southern faction by having initiated the loan proposals in the first place. As Lindley put it, "The choice lies between probably offending the rebels and possible, or perhaps probable, anarchy at Peking. It is difficult here to judge which alternative is the worst ... the residents in the cities of the interior are defenceless; most of British shipping is also at the mercy of the rebels ... "[119] The question of a choice has also occurred to Jordan:[120]

> "One feels literally between the devil and the deep sea. All his (Yüan's) people say that he cannot go on without money, and as he himself puts it, 'the pot will cease boiling in a few days' But one cannot be sure that things are quite as bad as they are represented or that the Palace hoard is exhausted. The South will keenly resent foreign assistance to Yüan, but rather than let the government here collapse, I should be inclined to come to his rescue. It seems to be a choice of evils ... "

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[118] Tel. from Shanghai, 11 Dec. enclosed in Addis to F.O., 12 Dec. ibid. Contrast this with the Bank's policy in February 1912, after Sun Yat-sen's resignation from the Nanking Government, in M. Collis, Way-fooHg: the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (London 1965) 133.

[119] Lindley minutes on Jordan's tel. 16 Dec. FO 371/1097.

[120] Jordan to Campbell, 20 Dec. 1911, (private) FO 350/7.

At this time, a final alternative for a solution came from Sir Claude MacDonald, who suggested that all the Powers should combine to make a small loan to both the Imperialists and the Republicans.[121] His idea met with objections: Yüan would surely resent assistance for the revolutionaries, and Britain would lose his friendship if he knew that it was a British proposal; the amount of the loan would come into question, as it would be difficult to make each loan proportionate to the needs of each party; and most important of all, it was finally recognised that the two sides were more likely to come to terms if without means than if both were financed by outside help.[122] The negotiations between the two parties had commenced two days previously, on 18 December, and as far as British policy was concerned, the financial settlement now became an integral part of the general efforts made to produce a peaceful solution to the North-South conflict.

The Armistice and Negotiations

If there is to be any criterion for determining the influence exerted by British policy on the course of the Chinese Revolution, it must be sought for in the roles played by Jordan in Peking and the British Consuls in the Yangtze in arranging and sustaining the armistice and subsequent negotiations from December 1911 to February 1912. Strictly interpreted British action during the period may be construed to smack of interference in Chinese internal affairs. But Britain's good offices as a mediator was a necessary preliminary to bringing the two sides to the conference table, divided as they were by such deep-seated mistrust and hostility. There was never a question of Britain abandoning her official posture of neutrality: all diplomatic efforts during

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[121] MacDonald tel. F.O. 20 Dec. FO 371/1097.

[122] Pearson and Langley minutes, on above, ibid.

the negotiations were made in the form of unofficial advice and proposals, available to Yüan Shih-k'ai on the one hand and the Republicans represented by Wu T'ing-fang on the other. As for Britain's motives in stepping into this difficult civil dispute, it was the simple desire to terminate the sporadic clashes between the armed forces of the two sides and to reestablish the conditions of peace and stability under a nationally accepted government. British neutrality was never forfeited in the pursuit of these motives. As Jordan testified, "I receive numerous letters both from Republicans and Imperialists expressing appreciation of the impartial attitude we have observed throughout, and when the New York Herald recently took exception to British policy, quite a number of unknown Chinese took up our defence in the local papers."[123]

There is no doubt that the decision to mediate a negotiated peace between the North and South was arrived at only after Yüan's appearance in Peking in mid-November, when he resumed his close relationship with Sir John Jordan. Late in October, 1911, Jordan had insisted that "I do not think that mediation is practicable or stands any chance of success at present ... no basis of compromise seems possible ... as the struggle proceeds some opportunity for mediation may occur."[124] The revolutionary movement spread with great

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[123]Jordan to Langley, 17 Jan. 1912 (private) FO 350/8. The incident involving the New York Herald concerned a commentary by a correspondent, Mr. Ohl, who accused the British Government and Jordan in particular of undermining the Manchu cause by arranging the truce with the republicans, and proceeded to argue that by doing so Britain was "backing the wrong horse," as China could only survive under an old-style monarchy. The column was widely read and circulated, although repudiated by the American Minister at Peking. This led to Jordan being singled out by some Manchu fanatics as Yüan Shih-k'ai's "evil genius." See North China Herald 13 Jan. 1912, p.102, col. 2-3; Jordan to Langley, 5 Feb. (private) FO 350/8. Langley decided that Ohl "must be a proper sort of ruffian only produced by the American press" ibid.

[124]Jordan tel. F.O. 29 Oct. 1911, FO 371/1094.

rapidity in November, which saw the bulk of the cities and provinces falling into Republican hands.[125] Disorderly conditions reached an alarming scale and on 25 November the British Acting Consul-General at Hankow reported that shells were falling into the foreign legations from the nearby battlefields.[126] The next day Jordan met with Yüan to protest about the threat to the British community at Hankow, to which Yüan replied that the Imperial troops were acting entirely on the defensive, and "as proof of his sincerity assured me he would gladly order a suspension of the hostility if an armistice could be arranged on mutually satisfactory terms."[127] There is reason to believe that the challenge to arrange a truce was immediately taken up by Jordan. His instructions to Joffe were to send "a verbal and unofficial message" to Li Yüan-hung regarding Yüan's willingness to call a truce, "taking care to explain that our only object is to avert useless bloodshed and to prevent the prolongation of the dangerous situation in which the British community has been placed for some six weeks."[128] On 27 November, Han-yang was recaptured by the Imperial troops. Li was ready to accept an armistice based on three terms: the armistice would last for fifteen days, each side holding territory presently occupied; the representatives from all the revolutionaries of the provinces to meet in Shanghai to elect plenipotentiaries to negotiate with Yüan; and the armistice to be extended for a further fifteen days if necessary[129] Yüan found the conditions acceptable,

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[125] Some of the important ones include Shanghai, which fell on 4 November, Hangchow the next day, and Canton on 9 November. After some bitter fighting Nanking fell on 2 December. C.T. Liang, The Chinese Revolution of 1911 (New York 1962) Table C in the Appendix, gives a table of the dates and circumstances of the uprisings in all the provinces following the Wuchang outbreak.

[126] Joffe tel. enclosed in Jordan tel. F.O. 26 Nov. 1911, FO 371/1096.

[127] Jordan tel. Joffe, enclosed in Jordan tel. F.O. 26 Nov. ibid.

[128] ibid.

[129] Joffe tel. Jordan 27 Nov. enclosed in Jordan tel. F.O. 28 Nov. ibid.

but would not agree to them finally until he was better informed as to how representative Li was of the Southern faction.[130] In fact, with the recapture of Han-yang Yüan was not too eager for a truce, and he intimated to Jordan that he had heard it rumoured that Li's position was much shaken because of the loss of those cities. Here Jordan demonstrated the extent of his influence over Yüan: "I took the occasion to point out to the Premier that an advance by the Imperial army on Wuchang (where Li's troops had fled) would throw upon him the responsibility of further bloodshed."[131] The warning had effect: On 1 December Yüan came up with his own set of terms for a truce. These differed from the suggestions of Li Yüan-hung in that the truce was to be for an initial three days, and that the British Consul-General at Hankow was to sign the armistice agreement as a witness.[132]

As the arrangements were so hastily made, Jordan had little time for consultations with London before sanctioning the moves made by both Yüan and Li. Initially the Foreign Office did not take too enthusiastically to the idea of British mediation. The primary concern was that "it will be awkward if either side fails to observe the armistice after it has been signed by the British Consul-General, even as a witness."[133] Another concern was that "comment may be made by the other Powers, and it would have been preferable if all or none of the Consuls had been asked to witness."[134] But these factors were offset by the salutary aims of the armistice, and Jordan's initiative was generally applauded. Campbell pointed out that witnessing the agreement did

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[130] Jordan tel. Joffe, 28 Nov. enclosed in Jordan tel. F.O. 28 Nov. ibid.

[131] Jordan to F.O. 17 Dec. FO 371/1310.

[132] Jordan tel. F.O. 1 Dec. FO 371/1096.

[133] Lindley minutes, ibid.

[134] A.N. minutes, ibid.

not bind the British Consul-General to see that the terms were not infringed by either side,[135] and since the issues were too important to allow for delay, Grey agreed that "It is not an occasion when we should be punctilious, and Sir John Jordan acted quite rightly."[136]

The truce of three days began on 3 December 1911. The fall of Nanking the previous day was bound to restore the confidence of the revolutionaries, so Yüan was eager to work out the arrangements for convening talks.[137] He had another meeting with Jordan on the same day, and tried to gauge from Jordan what sort of settlement would meet with the approval of the foreign Powers. Jordan adhered to his repeated views that a constitutional government with nominal Manchu sovereignty would generally meet with foreign approval. Yüan however, recognised that the Southern revolutionaries were adamant about a republic, and suggested two ways to circumvent the difficulty. On the one hand he urged that Jordan and the British Government should dispel the belief of the Yangtze revolutionaries that a republic would enjoy the support of foreign public opinion, and on the other hand, Yüan proposed to work for the abdication of the Regent as a step towards making constitutional government palatable to the South. For both plans Jordan expressed his support.[138] London also regarded Yüan's views sound. "The most pressing necessity of the situation are (sic) a prolongation of the armistice and removal of the Regent ... something might be done ... at Peking to help Yüan in his efforts."[139]

On 4 December terms were drawn up by Yüan in consultation with Jordan for the extension of the truce on its expiration for a further fifteen days.

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[135]Campbell minutes, ibid.

[136]Grey minutes, ibid.

[137]Jordan tel. F.O. 3 Dec. ibid.

[138]Jordan tel. F.O. 4 Dec. (confidential) ibid.

[139]Lindley minutes, ibid.

T'ang Shao-i (1860-1934) was appointed to represent Yüan in talks with the republicans, and he was expected to reach Hankow in the same week.[140] The Foreign Office, pleased with the turn of events, decided to inform the Japanese of the proceedings "otherwise the Japanese may think we are going behind their backs."[141] It was then discovered that the Japanese were indeed suspicious of Britain's involvement in the armistice, and were placated only after Jordan's assurances that in future Japan would be invited to cooperate with Britain in assisting the negotiations. "It would strengthen our hands if we were in a position to let it be known that other Powers were with us. But concerted action of more than two or three legations is too unwieldy to be (workable)"[142] The Japanese were only too glad to cooperate, and recognising the special position which Jordan held with Yüan they were also amenable to Jordan being the only active intermediary.[143]

On 6 December, two objectives of British policy at this juncture were realized: the truce was extended again, and the Regent abdicated. This last development did not visibly improve the situation, nor have the effect that Yüan hoped for.[144] But it was proof to the revolutionaries that Yüan was determined to strip the Manchus of all their power, and in this way

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[140] Jordan tel. F.O. 4 Dec. ibid. T'ang Shao-i was born in Kwangtung, and in 1873 sent by the Imperial Government to study in the United States, where he remained for seven years at Columbia and New York Universities. In 1883 he was appointed secretary to Yüan Shih-k'ai as Resident in Korea. By 1905 he had reached the position of a Junior Vice-President of Foreign Affairs, as well as Director-General of the Shanghai-Nanking and Lu-Han Railways. In 1907 T'ang was Senior Vice-President of the Board of Communications, and in 1911 President of the same Board. See Max Perleberg, Who's Who in Modern China (Hongkong 1954) 204; Chün I, T'ang-tai ming-jen shih-lüeh (Shanghai 1912) 9b-13b.

[141] Lindley Minutes, Jordan tel. F.O. 4 Dec. FO 371/1096.

[142] Jordan tel. F.O. 8 Dec. ibid.

[143] MacDonald tel. F.O. 9 Dec. FO 371/1097.

[144] Jordan to Campbell, 10 Dec. (private) FO 350/7. and Jordan to F.O. 20 Dec. FO 371/1310, in which he reported that the native press was suspicious that the Regent's abdication only indicated a victory of the Empress Dowager's party in their attempt to revive the old rule.

ought to help in reconciling the North and South.[145] On 9 December a further fifteen days' truce was signed at Hankow, and the first peace talks took place at Shanghai on 18 December. Because of the speed with which decisions must be made, Jordan acted throughout on his own initiative in giving personal advice to Yüan and telegraphing instruction to the Consuls at Hankow and Shanghai. It is to the credit of the Foreign Office in London that his efforts were always supported and appreciated. "It is doubtful whether there would ever have been an armistice if Sir John Jordan had not advised Yüan."[146]

With the commencement of negotiations British policy entered into a new and decisive phase. All the earlier debates over a practicable form of government for the new China, the degree of support to be accorded to Yüan Shih-k'ai, the financial question and Japan's aims and intentions must now be resolved whether by compromise or concession. While Sir John Jordan continued to give top priority to the espousal of Yüan's policies, changed circumstances, which included the defection of T'ang Shao-i to the Republican camp and the arrival of Sun Yat-sen to head a rival government at Nanking, made it necessary for both Yüan and Jordan to abandon some of their old aspirations and instead to facilitate the election of Yüan as provisional President of the Chinese Republic which eventually took place in March 1912.

It was therefore Yüan Shih-k'ai, and not Sun Yat-sen or any of the other revolutionaries, who held the centre stage in the final drama of the Revolution. In an interview with Dr. George Morrison of the London Times on

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[145] See the London and China Express p.873, col. 1. There is, of course, also a possibility that the South would see it as a sign of weakness on the part of Peking, and strengthen their demands for the Emperor's abdication. Yüan first broached the subject of abdication to the Regent late in November, but the Regent refused to contemplate the idea. Jordan tel. F.O. 26 Nov. (confidential) FO 371/1096. MaxMüller commented, "The Prince Regent with his character was sure to show firmness or rather obstinacy at the wrong moment," ibid.

[146] Lindley minutes, on Jordan to F.O. 17 Dec. FO 371/1310.

20 November, 1911, Yüan reiterated his belief that retention of the monarchy was still the best safeguard against anarchy and disintegration of the Empire. No amount of argument on Morrison's part could convince Yüan of the determination of the South to abolish the Manchu Dynasty altogether.[147] Jordan's impressions of Yüan at this time, however, obtained after an interview on 26 November, was: "I don't believe he has any real intention of effacing himself, and in the end he will probably keep to the winning side ... "[148] Taken together the two accounts go a long way towards explaining Yüan's subsequent actions during the peace talks.

The first stumbling block to the convening of the peace conference was disagreement over the choice of a meeting place. As we have seen, on 7 December T'ang Shao-i was appointed to represent Yüan, and he left for Hankow where it was presumed the conference would take place, with the assistance of Everard D. Fraser, the British Consul-General. On arrival, however, T'ang found that the revolutionaries now insisted on Shanghai as meeting place. Yüan yield to their demands; the first meeting between T'ang and Wu T'ing-fang was scheduled for 18 December.[149] Wu's intransigent attitude from the very beginning served to convince Jordan that he represented at Shanghai only the

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[147] Times 21 Nov. 1911, p.8 col. 1-2; see also C. Pearl, op.cit. 231-2; J.O.p. Bland, Recent Events and Present Policies in China (Philadelphia 1912) 152-3.

[148] Jordan to Campbell, 27 Nov. (private) FO 350/7.

[149] Wu T'ing-fang explained that he was unable to meet T'ang at Hankow because of the multitude of duties which demanded his presence at Shanghai. See Jordan tel. F.O. 12 Dec. FO 371/1097. It was clear that there was dissension among the revolutionary ranks, and that the leaders at Shanghai denied the authority of those at Wuchang to speak for all the eleven revolutionary provinces. The British attitude was summed up by Campbell, "it doesn't matter where the conference takes place. The important thing is that all revolutionaries should be represented." His minutes on Jordan's tel. ibid.

extreme faction of the revolutionary party, and since they were expected to reject outright any hope of the retention of the Manchu Emperor, Jordan confided to Campbell that "it will probably take a plain threat of foreign intervention to bring them to their senses."[150] It is clear that when negotiation began, the British Government was aiming not for the fulfilment of republican ideals in the Chinese Revolution, but rather for the realization of the dreams of such earlier reformers as Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, the establishment of a Western-styled constitutional monarchy in China.

On 15 December, the revolutionary party proposed the terms on which negotiations were to be based: the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty, liberal treatment of the Imperial family, and the generally considerate treatment of all the other Manchus and a united China. Both the British Government and Yüan Shih-k'ai regarded the terms as reasonable, though predictably Yüan refused to accept the first condition.[151] The deadlock over the question of the future form of government now seemed the only obstacle to a successful peace conference, and Yüan when queried by Jordan replied that he had no fixed policies to deal with the eventual failure of the Shanghai assembly, "and that probably he would be compelled to ask for the good offices of the friendly Powers."[152]

At this point the Japanese Government saw an opportunity for an attempt at Anglo-Japanese intervention in the Chinese situation. In an interview with Yüan on 17 December, the Japanese Minister, Ijuin Hikokichi, anticipating the failure of the Shanghai conference, expressed an opinion that if China found it necessary to have recourse to foreign intervention, she should leave the

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[150] Jordan to Campbell, 10 Dec. (private) FO 350/7.

[151] Jordan tel. F.O. 15 Dec. FO 371/1097.

[152] Jordan tel. F.O. 17 Dec. (secret) ibid.

question to the decision of Great Britain and Japan to the exclusion of all the other Powers.[153] The Japanese tactics were naturally viewed with displeasure by London. Sir Walter Langley feared that the Japanese Minister seemed to be "going rather fast and we shall have to be careful not to be dragged further than we wish."[154] Sir Edward Grey at this stage seemed to have sensed that republicanism was bound to win over Yüan's monarchical policy. His comment on the Japanese opinion is interesting:[155]

> "The Japanese ought to be as good as, or better judges than we are of the situation, but the (stand) taken by them would possibly have placed us both in the position of being committed to intervene on the losing side. This would have caused great damage to British life, property and trade, and have given a great opening to other Powers who played a waiting game."

At the opening session of the peace conference, the two commissioners T'ang Shao-i and Wu T'ing-fang exchanged credentials, discussed the suspension of hostilities and postponed further meetings pending the acceptance by Yüan of the conditions set forth earlier. Meanwhile the six Powers interested, Japan, the United States, Germany, France, Russia and Britain, decided at a meeting of the Diplomatic Corps in Peking that an identical note should be sent to the Shanghai conference, calling its attention to the necessity of arriving as soon as possible at an understanding to end the conflict.[156] The futility of these polite exhortations would soon be seen. The determination of the revolutionaries on a republic was as strong as ever, and any hopes of a speedy peace would have to come in the form of concessions from Yüan and Peking. It

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[153] Jordan tel. F.O. 18 Dec. (secret) FO 371/1310.

[154] Langley minutes on Jordan tel. 17 Dec. (secret) FO 371/1097.

[155] Grey minutes on Jordan tel. 18 Dec. (secret) FO 371/1310.

[156] Jordan tel. F.O. 15 Dec. FO371/1097.

was not an easy task that Jordan and Joffe had undertaken.

On 19 December, T'ang Shao-i came to see Joffe at the British Consulate. T'ang had learned that the republicans intended to demand an acceptance of a republic as a condition to further talks, and Joffe was requested to see Wu T'ing-fang and reason with him. Wu proved to be truculent and intimated that the time had come for the Powers to declare for one side or the other. "If they did not support the revolutionary side," he insisted, "the people would never forget it ... Yüan Shih-k'ai must go if there were to be any compromise."[157] The British efforts at mediation was bound to run into trouble if this enmity continued between Yüan and Wu. The problem was compounded in the next few days when T'ang began to show signs of weakening, and finally deserted Yüan's cause to join the Republicans.[158]

At the second peace meeting on 20 December, T'ang and Wu managed to agree on the terms for an extension of the armistice, to 31 December. On the subject of the form of government, however, no compromise seemed possible. It was after this confrontation with the Republicans that T'ang indicated to Joffe he had found republican feeling very strong all along the Yangtze and that his opinion was Yüan must modify his policy."[159] On the next day, T'ang's break with Yüan was out in the open. A communiqué was sent to all the Shanghai newspapers declaring that T'ang Shao-i was ready to accept Wu's views;

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[157] Joffe tel. Jordan, in Jordan tel. F.O. 20 Dec. (private) FO 371/1098.

[158] J.O.P. Bland, op.cit. 159-63, 215-22, gives an interesting analysis of T'ang's motivations. Bland suggests that T'ang had never concealed his republican sympathies, and therefore Yüan's sincerity in appointing T'ang as representative was open to doubt. Bland thinks also that to a certain extent T'ang was led astray, towards dizzy heights of personal ambition, by "the fascination of Sun's political will-of-the-wisps." Most telling of all, an explanation could be found, according to Bland, in the fact of T'ang's being a Cantonese, and thus displaying all the clannishness of his people, the tendency to consider himself a Cantonese first and a Chinese official afterwards.

[159] Joffe tel. Jordan, 20 Dec. in Jordan tel. F.O. 21 Dec. FO 371/1098.

T'ang himself confirmed the report to Joffe, arguing that it was the only solution that would stop the fighting.[160] The British mediators were caught in the dilemma. Jordan, knowing that Yüan still professed to be opposed to a republic, was convinced that "a continuance of the struggle seems highly probable."[161] The Foreign Office echoed, "This is not at all hopeful."[162]

Finding himself momentarily isolated against the Republicans, Yüan Shih-k'ai looked to the two foreign Powers on whom he could best rely for championship of his case. Both Jordan and Ijuin were summoned to see the Premier on 22 December at two separate sessions. Jordan met with Yüan first. It was evident that Yüan desired a promise of support and intervention from the British Government for a limited monarchy, as he "stated most emphatically, he would have nothing to do with a republic."[163] Jordan would not be committed. "I said that intervention to be effective would apparently mean coercing half the country, and he would realise what a serious task that implied. We wanted a strong and united China, under whatever form of government the Chinese people wished."[164] Jordan however, did give it as his personal opinion that he agreed with Yüan's arguments that the Imperial idea was too firmly rooted in the habits and minds of the people to tolerate such a violent break with the past. The outcome of the interview was thus a compromise: Yüan promised

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[160] Joffe tel. Jordan, 21 Dec. in Jordan tel. F.O. 21 Dec. ibid. T'ang did not tender his resignation to Yüan until 30 December.

[161] ibid.

[162] Lindley minutes, ibid.

[163] Jordan tel. F.O. 22 Dec. ibid.

[164] ibid.

to get the Throne's acceptance of T'ang's proposal that the form of government should be left to the decision of a representative assembly convoked for the purpose.[165]

Ijuin saw Yüan immediately after Jordan. When the two Ministers met outside Yüan's chambers, the Japanese informed Jordan that he proposed to say that Japanese Government wanted a strong and united China, "and adhered to a limited monarchy as the best solution."[166] At the interview, however, the Japanese indulged in another bungling attempt to force Yüan's hand to declare for a monarchy under the threat of foreign intervention. The incident led to a diplomatic scandal which threatened to upset the negotiations completely. Contrary to his statement to Jordan, Ijuin advised Yüan that Japan would never recognise a republic in China, and would interfere with force if necessary to prevent it. Yüan then lost no time in wiring T'ang in Shanghai that, "the six Powers would not recognise a republic and would insist on a monarchy."[167] T'ang related the news to Dr. Morrison, who was then in Shanghai, and the story broke in the London Times the same day. The Foreign Office demanded an explanation from Jordan, and it was then that tempers cooled and facts became distinguishable from some consciously perpetrated rumours.

It was a fact that Ijuin had made the threat to Yüan. Since Yüan had constantly been told that the British and the Japanese were acting in complete accord, it would have been natural that he should think the British Government agreed with the Japanese attitude,[168] (though it is difficult to see how he could have given credence to this theory having just obtained Jordan's views an hour ago.) Yüan decided to wring the most political capital out of the

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[165] Jordan to F.O. 28 Dec. (confidential) FO 371/1310.

[166] Jordan tel. F.O. 22 Dec. FO 371/1093.

[167] Jordan tel. F.O. 23 Dec. FO 371/1098.

[168] The interview between Yüan and Ijuin is also dealt with in A.M. Pooley, op.cit. 66.

situation; his mischief was in the wording of the telegram to T'ang, in which he indicated that all the six Powers were ready to intervene. No doubt he wished to give the republicans the impression that this action was along the same lines as the identical note sent by the six Powers on 20 December. Yüan purposedly manipulated to his own advantage what could have been at best a mere misunderstanding. London was most distressed: "We knew that as far as we are concerned, Yüan has no ground whatsoever for his assertion.... This is very mischievous ...."[169]

Yüan's motives were variously interpreted. In the first place, Yüan was obviously hoping to use the ruse to strengthen his hands against the cries for a republic from the South. Yet it was also possible that Yüan wanted to be urged by the Powers, and especially Britain and Japan, to accept the presidency of the republic, and hoped that the events would force them to do so. Finally the Foreign Office began to suspect that T'ang would not have expressed his personal defection to the revolutionary camp if he had not previously obtained the private concurrance of Yüan.[170] In fact, Yüan seemed to have played an important role, both openly and surreptitously, in all the recent developments, to the chagrin of the British Government which was trying to assist the negotiation of an honourable peace.

However, an important point was arrived at during this stage of the negotiations. On 24 December Jordan held a lengthy meeting with Yüan and Prince Ch'ing, at the conclusion of which the Chinese government agreed to

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[169] Langley minutes on Jordan tel. F.O. 23 Dec. FO 371/1098.

[170] These were the F.O. minutes attached to Jordan's telegrams of 22-24 December, 1911, ibid. See also H. Croly, op.cit. 430-1. Some general views of Yüan's manipulations during the negotiations are also seen in Y. C. Wang, Chinese Intellectuals and the West (N. Carolina, 1966) 292-4.

authorize T'ang Shao-i to leave the decision as to the future form of government to a special National Assembly composed of representatives from all provinces to be elected in the next three months on mutually agreed conditions.[171] The decision was heartily endorsed by Jordan: "I said that the proposal seemed to me a fair one and would place the government in a morally strong position and throw upon the revolutionaries the responsibility of continuing the war if they rejected it."[172] Ijuin was informed the same day. Resorting to delay tactics, the Japanese Minister asked Yüan to defer sending the instructions to T'ang pending the opinion of Tokyo.

It turned out that Tokyo was entirely against this concessionary step. After an interview with the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sir Claude MacDonald reached certain conclusions regarding Japanese policy. The Japanese Government, he found, was still convinced that a republic in China would end in the disruption of the Empire; they believed that a further combined effort by the six Powers should be made, in the form of an ernest appeal to the revolutionary party to accept a limited monarchy. It was clear to the Japanese, (as to the British Foreign Office) that the proposed National Assembly would almost assuredly vote for a republic, and if the Powers agreed to this step, they would be committed to accepting the Assembly's decision.[174] Unappealing as this would seem the British Government nevertheless would not and could not endorse Japan's attempt again to rally support for intervention.

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[171] Report of the interview, enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 28 Dec. (confidential) FO 371/1310. It was at this meeting that Yüan spoke scathingly of the incompetence of the republicans and declared he would resign from office should the Assembly select a republic; ibid.

[172] Jordan tel. F.O. 24 Dec. FO 371/1098.

[173] Ibid.

[174] MacDonald telegrams of 24 and 26 Dec. ibid.

Sir Edward Grey decided that "the advice (from the Powers to the revolutionaries) will not be given now, for I don't suppose we shall be the only Power opposed to giving it."[175]

The Japanese bid for intervention was carried out on two fronts. On the day that MacDonald was trying to restrain the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Tokyo, the Japanese Charge d'Affaires in London delievered a similar note to the Foreign Office, which resorted to a naive use of bluff to influence British policy. The Yamaza Memorandum began by accusing Sir John Jordan of having told Ijuin that "in view of the difficulty of the Shanghai Conference coming to a satisfactory conclusion on the basis of a constitutional monarchy, it would be better to save the situation for the present at least by supporting Yüan Shih-k'ai as the president of the republic."[176] The Japanese Note then proceeded to argue against such a policy, and reasserted their wish to see the Powers take concerted action for a limited monarchy.[177] The Foreign Office was taken back, to say the least, at this supposed commitment made by Jordan. Once again Grey explained to Yamaza Britain's unshakable neutral stand:[178]

> "We should be careful not to be drawn into any attempt to force upon the Revolutionaries and upon Yüan a solution that either of them is not prepared to accept: we should confine our action to mediation as hitherto, making it clear that we desire to see a united and strong China, ... And if we go beyond this action to the extent of expressing to the Revolutionaries a preference for a constitutional monarchy it should only be done after consultation and in concert with other Powers, otherwise the Powers will get into opposite camps, and there will be all sorts of trouble between Chinese and foreigners. Indeed this is a grave risk to be considered before any preference is expressed or anything like preference exerted even by all the Powers in concert."

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[175] Grey minutes on Jordan tel. 26 Dec. FO 371/1097, and F.O. tel. MacDonald 29 Dec. FO 371/1098.

[176] Yamaza memorandum, 24 Dec. (confidential) FO 371/1098.

[177] ibid.

[178] Grey's reply, ibid.

Meanwhile from both Peking and the British Embassy in Tokyo came denials of the statement charged to Jordan by the Japanese. Jordan telegraphed, "I am not in favour and have never been in favour of supporting Yüan as president of the republic. He has always told me (that he?) would accept no such office ... I have invariably made it clear that the question of monarchy or republic is one which the Chinese people are best qualified to decide ..."[179] MacDonald was convinced that Ijuin must have misunderstood Jordan, of whose views he himself was well informed. In a "very confidential" addendum MacDonald suggested that the Japanese Foreign Office was aware that Ijuin's knowledge of the English language has not been sufficient to make him understand others fully, or to make himself understood, so that the incident could have been a genuine case of misunderstanding.[180] It might well be. On the other hand, this could have been just another endeavour by the Japanese to create a situation in which foreign intervention would be called for to aver a supposedly worse evil.

By 26 December Japan's stalling tactics were foiled when Yüan telegraphed T'ang to broach the idea of a National Assembly vote on the form of government, without waiting for Tokyo's opinion.[181] Jordan did meet with Ijuin though, on the same day the instructions were despatched, and pointed out to him that the revolutionaries held as hostages three-quarters of all the foreign lives and property in China, and the fear was they would resent any attempt to dictate to them the form of government and resort to retaliatory measures against foreigners in their territory. The British position was

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[179] Jordan tel. F.O. 25 Dec. ibid.

[180] MacDonald tel. F.O. 26 Dec. ibid.

[181] Jordan tel. F.O. 26 Dec. ibid.

particularly delicate, as the great bulk of the population of Hong Kong and Singapore was drawn from the Southern provinces of China and openly sympathetic towards the revolutionaries.[182] Grey meanwhile endorsed Yüan's move, but warned against any form of over-enthusiasm. "I think we should not become responsible for any proposals made by Yüan to the revolutionaries, further than to say when asked whether we see objection to them or not, or whether they appear to us prima facie to be reasonable .... If there is any question of going beyond this the other four Powers should be brought into consultation ... but my personal view remains unchanged, that any attempt to decide the issue by preference is very risky."[183]

Yüan Shih-k'ai, of course, was fully aware of the fact that the Japanese dreaded the outcome of a National Assembly vote on the form of government. Once again he sought to use this knowledge and manipulate the situation to force the Japanese into an open posture of acquiescence, and at the same time faciliate his own subsequent conversion to republicanism. In his wire to T'ang Shao-i concerning the Assembly, Yüan stated explicitly that the Japanese absolutely objected to a republic. As he expected, the information was leaked to Wu T'ing-fang, who immediately declared that the publication of this news would unite all the Chinese in a fight to the death. The revolutionaries, he declared, were prepared to resume hostilities on 31 December (when the armistice expired) unless they heard to the contrary. A telegram was sent to Tokyo holding the Japanese responsible for the continuance of the struggle with all its consequences.[184]

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[182] Jordan to F.O. (confidential) 28 Dec. FO 371/1310.

[183] Grey memorandum, 26 Dec. FO 371/1098.

[184] Shanghai tel. Jordan (secret) enclosed in Jordan tel. F.O. 28 Dec. ibid. FO 371/1098.

Yüan's double-dealing yielded the results he desired. The Japanese announced that they had no objections to the convocation of a National Assembly.[185] An Imperial decree calling for the Assembly was issued on 28 December.[186] But events were speedily moving on to a different solution of the Chinese crisis, and the Assembly was never actually convened.

On 27 December, T'ang Shao-i telegraphed Yüan that the revolutionaries would accept nothing but a republic, and if this was not to be a basis then they were unwilling to continue the negotiations. T'ang reported that from his own investigations popular feeling in all the Eastern and Southern provinces was firmly established in favour of a republic; with the armistice due to expire in a few days he urged that the National Assembly should be convoked immediately and the question of the form of government settled. One further complication in the situation was that Sun Yat-sen had arrived in Shanghai (he reached Shanghai on 24 December) and was engaged in organizing a provisional republican government.[187] On the 29th, and without authority from Yüan, T'ang signed four articles with the revolutionaries, which were in Jordan's opinion "one-sided and unfair to the Imperialists."[188] By these T'ang agreed that the Manchu Government should be precluded from raising any loans, and that all the Imperial troops should retire to a considerable distance from their actual positions on the expiration of the truce. The next day T'ang signed a further

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[185] Jordan tel. F.O. 28 Dec. ibid.
Yüan's trickery was all too apparent to the F.O. Lindley noted, "I have little doubt Yüan has misrepresented the Japanese attitude to Wu." ibid.

[186] Jordan tel. F.O. 28 Dec. ibid, and 31 Dec. F.O. 371/1310.

[187] T'ang tel. Yüan, enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 2 Jan. 1912. FO 371/1311.

[188] Jordan to F.O. 6 Jan. 1912, ibid.
Jordan was also aggrieved with T'ang when he "tried to make out that the consular body in Shanghai favoured a republic, and he also laid stress on the fact that the identic communication presented to both parties at the conference by the six Powers had been regarded by the revolutionary party as implying recognition of their having formed a government." ibid.

set of four articles which dealt with the composition of the proposed National Assembly. Yüan's reply to these actions on 30 December was to refute some of the articles, especially those relating to loans and the withdrawal of troops. He also reminded T'ang that his powers were limited to discussions only. T'ang's reaction to the rebuke was to resign his appointment as peace commissioner, which Yüan accepted on 2 January, 1912. Henceforth all negotiations were personally handled by Yüan in telegraphic communications with Wu T'ing-fang.[189]

The news of T'ang's resignation and the inevitable break-down of the peace talks was received with anger and dismay among the British communities interested in China.[190] The suddenness of T'ang's departure and the general mystery which surrounded most of his actions in Shanghai now became the focus of much analytical discussion. All previous suspicions of his personal sympathies with the republicans while officially speaking for Yüan Shih-k'ai were now confirmed; the general view in Peking was that T'ang thought he could force the hand of the Government and bring about a situation which must leave Yüan no option but to accept the presidency of a republic.[191] On the other hand, Sir John Jordan suggested that since it was obvious Yüan must have known about T'ang's real sentiments all along, why such a person was chosen to go to Shanghai "is only explicable on the theory that Yüan, in spite of all his protestations, would in the end accept the Presidency of the Republic."[192] The one person who held the key to the baffling circumstances was still Yüan Shih-k'ai.

On 1 January, 1912, Jordan saw Yüan to discuss the critical turn of events. Jordan found the Premier in a strange and unusual mood. He looked ill

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[189] Details are given in C.T. Liang, op.cit. 32-5; "Nan-pei i-ho" in HHKM VIII, 84-99. See also Jordan to F.O. 6 Jan. 1912, FO 371/1311.

[190] See London and China Express 5 Jan. 1912, and Times 5 Jan. 1912.

[191] Jordan to F.O. 6 Jan. 1912, FO 371/1311.

[192] Jordan to Campbell, 4 Jan. 1912, (private) FO 350/8.

and depressed, and declared that as he had exhausted all his efforts to effect a peaceful settlement, and was no longer able to control the situation, he too was contemplating resignation. Jordan recalled, "Yüan's manner and language were so different, from (what) they have hitherto been, and so tantalisingly puzzling that I felt constrained to ask if there were no outside influence at work, but he replied in the negative."[193] Since Yüan had always been very frank and open with the British Minister, the latter now admitted to some misgivings and wondered what Yüan's game really was. "Perhaps he scarcely knows himself, and his personal safety is evidently causing anxiety. He told me the sooner he died the better, as he had nothing to gain by living ..."[194] The view of the British Consul-General at Nanking, however, would suggest that Yüan had a great deal to live for. William H. Wilkinson reported that in the revolutionary camp it was generally believed that Yüan, if assured of his personal safety would agree to a republic. "The remarkable currency obtained by this belief," Wilkinson testified, "is perplexing in view of the Premier's stated and vehement denials of any such intention. It may be, however, that the public thinks he protests too much, and is unable to explain by any other theory the open defection of his henchman T'ang to the republican camp ..."[195] It would thus seem that T'ang's resignation was only the outward expression of a development that had been brewing for some time past in the private calculations of Yüan Shih-k'ai: his own conversion to republicanism.

Sun Yat-sen

From another direction Yüan's position was also forced out into the open: the activities of Sun Yat-sen. The last occasion on which Sun had personally

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[193] Jordan tel. F.O. 2 Jan (secret) FO 371/1310.

[194] Jordan to Campbell, 4 Jan. (private) FO 350/8.

[195] Wilkinson tel. Jordan, enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 4 Jan. FO 371/1311.

been involved in the revolutionary movement was the 1908 uprising in French Indo-China. Since then he had been travelling in South-east Asia and Europe, working in one way or another to promote his revolutionary cause, and in so doing had from time to time come into contact with either the British Foreign Office or the Colonial Office.

Soon after the Chen-nan Kuan debacle of 1908 the Foreign Office had been informed that Sun Yat-sen was residing in Singapore (where he had fled from French Indo-China) in the house of Chang Yung-fu, the local revolutionary leader.[196] On 30 January, 1908, the Wai-wu Pu had addressed a Note to Jordan requesting that the British Colonial Government should banish Sun from all British possessions because of his revolutionary activities. As the request was nothing but a favour asked of the British Government, Jordan had not thought there was any need for immediate haste in dealing with the matter, and in fact had not even informed the Foreign Office of the Note till much later.[197] On 9 February the Wai-wu Pu had sent Jordan another Note with a similar request; on 10 February the Chinese Minister in London had also made a formal request for Sun's banishment.[198] Both the Colonial authorities and Sir John Anderson, Governor of the Straits Settlements, had been reluctant to comply with the Chinese demand. R. E. Stubbs at the Colonial Office had felt "It would be a strong measure to banish him if he is living peaceably and there is nothing

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[196] For Sun's travels and movements see Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I.

[197] Jordan to F.O. 20 Feb. FO 371/421.
He had his reasons: he waited till he "had seen (his) way more clearly towards obtaining a favourable solution of one or two other pending questions." ibid.

[198] Li Ching-fang to F.O. 10 Feb. 1908, FO 371/421.
Alston's reaction tallied exactly with Jordan's on receipt of the Chinese request. "In view of the Chinese bad faith in the matter of Sir Robert Hart's successor we do not seem called upon at present to fall in with every demand that the Chinese may make from us." Alston's minutes, ibid.

to show that he is not devoting his zeal for reform to reforming himself."[199] On 14 February, however, it had been known that the government of Kwangsi Province had posted a reward of $20,000 for any person who could capture Sun dead or alive.[200] There had been a real fear of Sun Yat-sen's assassination on British soil, and Anderson had decided that he should be warned not to stir up any trouble while enjoying British refuge, all the while putting Sun under local police surveillance.[201]

At the end of the year Sun had left Singapore and arrived in Bangkok, where his brief sojourn had not been welcomed by the native Siamese population.[202] Before his departure for Singapore and Europe, however, Sun had made a public statement of his aim, "to create an independent Republic in South China."[203] This had drawn the special attention of the Colonial authorities in London, and Stubbs had remarked that the statement "should not be forgotten when reference is made to the 'right of assylum'"[204]

In August, 1909, Sun Yat-sen had been in London, where he had personally penned an appeal to the Colonial Office asking for permission to return to Hong Kong to visit his family. He had written, "I will guarantee that I will engage in no political affairs ..."[205] Sun had obviously hoped for the same

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[199] Stubbs minutes on F.O. to C.O. enclosing Li's Note, 12 Feb. 1908. CO 273/343.

[200] North China Herald, 14 Feb. 1908, p. 367 col. 2-3.

[201] Anderson tel. C.O. 5 Mar. 1908, CO 273/336

[202] The Siam Observer of 5 Dec. 1908, in a leading article, condemned the activities of this "unsuccessful rebel" in the country, causing embarrassment between the Siamese and Chinese Governments. See W.R.D. Beckett (Consul at Bangkok) to F.O. 12 Dec. 1908 (confidential) CO 273/353.

[203] Beckett to F.O. ibid.

[204] Stubbs minutes, ibid.

[205] Sun Yat-sen to C.O. 13 Aug. 1909, CO 129/364.

sort of treatment awarded him by Sir John Anderson in Singapore, where his stay had been permitted as long as he kept out of trouble. This time however, his appeal had fallen into the hands of Stubbs, who delivered a furious condemnation of Sun and his activities:[206]

> "I earnestly trust that this firebrand will not be allowed to enter Hong Kong ... Even if we could trust his promise not to take part in politics - and it is a risky thing to do - the Chinese Government will not ... they will be furiously indignant with His Majesty's Government - and with reason, for you will see from (his statement in Bankok) that he makes no secret of his object in life ... The man is not a mere doctrinnaire, but a clever and brave rebel who has not only organized but led risings ....
>
> A further point is that if he is allowed to reside in Hong Kong, the Chinese Government will do their best to get him assassinated. They will probably succeed - I believe there is an enormous price on his head, and we shall have a lot of trouble and shall probably have to insist on the punishment of a lot of officials, etc. This will create a lot of ill-feeling and cannot fail to damage the relations between China and His Majesty's Government."

Having read this, Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs, had suggested that the Foreign Office refuse Sun's application.[207] At first there had been again an inclination at the Foreign Office to use the Sun incident to gain other political ends. It had been felt that Jordan should be referred to, and "In view of the manner we have been treated by the Chinese recently ... Jordan might possible be glad of some weapon of offence, such as the presence of this notorious revolutionary on the Chinese frontier."[208] But Langley had restrained all such thinking: "I don't think this is the sort of weapon which Sir John Jordan could wish to have. It is too obvious that it might turn in one's hand."[209]

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[206] Stubbs minutes, ibid.

[207] C.O. to F.O. 19 Aug. 1909 (immediate) FO 371/735.

[208] R.H.G. minutes, ibid.

[209] Langley minutes, ibid.

His Hong Kong plans foiled, Sun Yat-sen had then departed London for a tour of the United States and Canada. In May 1910 he had left San Francisco for Japan, and in July the same year he had gone back to Singapore. On 30 October at Penang Sun had made an inflammatory speech in a Chinese club, which had got him into trouble again with the British authorities. He had subsequently been asked to leave the Colony, and the Colonial Office had decided that he should never be allowed back into Hong Kong.[210] He had left for Europe and early in 1911 had revisited the United States.

Thus Sun Yat-sen had been generally out of touch with the development of the revolutionary movement during these years before 1911, although his activities and presence in various parts of the British Empire at least had not escaped the attention of the appropriate British authorities. Finally, early in November 1911, Sun arrived in London, accompanied by "General" Homer Lea, and immediately set about arranging a loan with the British government to finance the revolution. Sun acted through Sir Trevor Dawson, of Messrs. Vickers, Sons and Maxim, who on 14 November communicated to the Foreign Office a statement by Sun setting forth his aims and policies in China.[211] Sun declared, among other things, that he wished to make "an alliance with Great Britain and the United

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[210] Anderson to C.O. 29 Dec. 1910 (confidential) CO 273/359 Even the North China Herald of 11 Nov. 1910 condemned Sun for his "abuse of hospitality" Extracts of the speech was translated from the Penang Sin Poe and sent to London by Anderson, where Stewart of the C.O. summarised: "Dr. Sun made it the principal point of his speech to point out that revolution was the most lucretive form of speculation." CO 273/359 Such a conclusion was not surprising, as Sun's aim in all these years of foreign travel had been to recruit funds for the revolution.

[211] Sun apparently had gone to the Foreign Office and had an interview with Addis a few days previously. His statement and his subsequent actions left no doubt that he immediately considered himself the leader of the Revolution and President-elect of the new republic, though Campbell had his doubts. "I told him he (Addis) had better see the man, hear what he had to say and let me know, but that we had no reason to suppose that the rebels were taking their orders from him ... "Campbell to Jordan, 11 Nov. 1911 (private) FO 350/1. Dawson's firm was obviously hoping to get orders for firearms from "President Sun."

States of America ..."[212] In addition, Dawson revealed that Sun would be able to obtain a loan of one million pounds if the British Government would agree to it.[213]

Sir Edward Grey would have nothing to do with Sun Yat-sen's plans. It was impossible for him to take a hand in a revolution, and Grey at this time was certainly not thinking of lending money to either side in the struggle.[214] The Foreign Office impression of Sun Yat-sen, quite distinct from that of his many other English friends, was voiced by Campbell, who asked Jordan if Sun was no more than "an armchair politician and windbag."[215] Jordan's reply: "Your views of Sun Yat-sen are exactly those I have expressed ... I was actually going to use the description 'armchair politician' but thought it rather long for telegraphic purposes."[216]

If their attitude towards Sun was none too complimentary, the Foreign Office did make an important concession to him now that the Revolution was a reality. Again through the efforts of Dawson, Sun requested permission to go to Hong Kong. "In the event of his shortly becoming President of the Chinese United States," Dawson urged," it would be very prejudicial to British interests that he should have a grievance against the British Government."[217] Sun was ready to forego having the banishment order against him rescinded publicly,

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[212] Statement handed by Dawson to F.O. 13 Nov. 1911 FO 371/1095.

[213] F.O. to Jordan, 14 Nov. 1911, ibid.

[214] ibid.

[215] Campbell to Jordan, 11 Nov. 1911 (private) FO 350/1.

[216] Jordan to Campbell, 27 Nov. 1911 (private) FO 350/7. The word Jordan chose instead was "coward" see Jordan tel. F.O. 20 Nov. 1911 FO 371/1095.

[217] Dawson to F.O. 15 Nov. ibid.

as it was "really a question of personal feeling only with him."[218] Both Sir John Jordan and the Hong Kong Government felt that under the changed circumstances there was perhaps little reason why Sun should be prevented from visiting the Colony, but it would be preferred if he did not reside there.[219] Stubbs at the Colonial Office was reluctant to concede even this much, and insisted that not only must Sun not take up residence in Hong Kong, but he must abstain from any public action or speech while there.[220] In actual fact, Sun did stay two days in the Colony before leaving for Shanghai on 22 December, 1911.

With Sun's arrival at Shanghai on 24 December, the negotiations between North and South entered their final and most critical phase. Since 12 December a conference of delegates from the thirteen revolutionary provinces had been sitting at Nanking, and on 29 December Sun Yat-sen was officially appointed provisional President to head a Revolutionary Chinese Republic. Sun accordingly arrived at Nanking on 1 January, 1912, when the inauguration ceremonies took place. In his inaugural speech Sun announced the aims and policies of the new Republic, which included the federation of the revolutionary provinces under a central government, and various other administrative reforms. He concluded with an expression of thanks to the foreign Powers for their sympathy with the revolutionary cause, and promised that the new government fully intended to carry out its duties to win recognition as a civilized state. The offer was again made to Yüan Shih-k'ai that he would be invited to take over the Provisional Presidency at Nanking immediately on the abdication of the Manchu

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[218] ibid.

[219] Jordan tel. F.O. 20 Nov. ibid.

[220] Stubbs minutes, on F.O. to C.O. 22 Nov. (urgent) CO 129/385.

Government, when Sun would resign in his favour.[221] On 11 January the newly-appointed Revolutionary Minister of Foreign Affairs telegraphed the Foreign Office in London informing the British Government of the Cabinet members in the new government, and hoping that the new Republic "will be accorded the same rights, immunities and privileges (nations) accord one another."[222] In accordance with their non-partisan policy, however, London decided that since there was no intention of recognizing this government the communication should remain unanswered.[223]

This indifference notwithstanding, Sun Yat-sen was now the chief spokesman for all the revolutionary provinces, and took over direct negotiations with Yüan Shih-k'ai by means of telegraphic communications. By mid-January the possibility of a compromise solution seemed in the making. Yüan indicated that agreement had been reached with Nanking that he should be authorised by decree after the Manchu abdication to carry on a government on a republican basis during the interval, pending the election by provincial deputies at Nanking and Peking of a President, which should follow in about a week's time. This would allow a new government to start at once on the task of restoring order and pacifying the country. He also intended to move the seat of government to Tientsin for a few months, first because it was necessary to make a complete break with the

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[221] Accounts of these developments are seen in Chang Nan-hsien, "Chung-hua Min-kuo cheng-fu ch'eng-li" in HHKM VIII, 11-18; Lo Chia-lun, op.cit. I, 287-301; J.O.P. Bland, "A financial housecleaning for China" in Asia, XXI, 1 (Jan. 1921) 56-7, in which he gives an indictment of the Nanking government; North China Herald comments on the new government, 20 Jan 1912, p. 177 col. 2-3; The Republican Manifesto, published on 5 Jan. 1912, is given in the Times 6 Jan, 1912, p. 6 col. 3, also in Sun Yat-sen, Kuo-fu Ch'üan-shu (Taiwan 1950) 446.
See also Wilkinson to Jordan, 27 Dec. 1911, 2 Jan. 1912, 5 Jan. and 11 Jan, 1912, enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 9 Feb. 1912, FO 371/1314.

[222] Wang Chung-hui tel. F.O. 11 Jan. 1912, FO 371/1310.

[223] Langley minutes, ibid; and F.O. tel. Jordan, 15 Jan. ibid.

past, and secondly the Republican leaders would not risk their lives by coming to Peking.[224] The proposed settlement seemed completely reasonable to the British authorities. When Yüan appealed for support from the British Government, Jordan readily agreed: "My own view is that the recognition of Yüan affords the only hope of securing anything like a stable government in China."[225]

The hopes of a speedy settlement were therefore running high; it was with a jolt that the British authorities received news a few days later that the whole arrangement had become stalled by new demands from Sun Yat-sen. On 20 January Sun dispatched two telegrams to Yüan, which stated that no provincial government must be established in the North, and that Yüan must receive his appointment from the Republicans and could not derive any authority from the Manchus. On 22 January, Sun made known in a telegram to Wu T'ing-fang at Shanghai, the five conditions on which he would hand over the Presidency to Yüan after the Manchu abdication. These would include a public declaration by Yüan that he absolutely supported the object of republicanism.[226] Jordan was bitter at Sun and the revolutionaries for this uncompromising attitude. He gathered that their objective was to show that victory rested with them, the realization of which was bound to create a dangerous situation in the North.[227] Stewart at the Foreign Office put the blame for the deadlock on the rise of a radical party among the influential revolutionaries, but concluded that "We are very much in the dark now as to what the situation is."[228] Both the North China

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[224] Jordan tel. F.O. 19 Jan. (confidential) FO 371/1311.

[225] Jordan, ibid.

[226] Sun Yat-sen, op.cit. 454; Wilkinson to Jordan, 24 Jan. enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 9 Feb. 1912, FO 371/1314. See also Times 22 Jan. p. 9 leader.

[227] Jordan to F.O. 22 Jan. (confidential) FO 371/1312.

[228] Stewart minutes, ibid.

Herald and the Times roundly condemned Sun for his obstinacy.[229]

One of the inherent dangers in the threatened breakdown of the negotiations was that of foreign intervention, and once again it was all Britain could do to restrain the Japanese inclinations in this direction. Ijuin saw Yüan on 21 January, and came away with gloomy impressions. Indeed Ijuin confided to Jordan that "no settlement seemed practicable, without foreign intervention."[230] Yamaza also came to the Foreign Office to find out what the British Government proposed to do. Grey would hear of no talk of intervention and cautioned, "We had better wait."[231] Only after this did the Japanese concede that the monarchical cause in China was doomed, although they were as convinced as ever that this form of government was best for China's needs.[232]

Meanwhile the renewed intransigence of the South was matched by the growth of a conservative movement among the Manchu dignitaries in Peking. The confused situation has given encouragement to those who opposed the proposed abdication of the Throne, and there was fear of intensified hostilities.[233] Peking was in a state of chaos, Tieh-liang (formerly Minister of War and a rival of Yüan) has suddenly returned to the capital and was supposedly organizing the Imperial forces for a final show-down with the republicans, the machinery of government was entirely disorganized, and the foreign legations were full of Manchu refugees. The armistice was due to be expired on 29 January, and in the current deadlocked atmosphere was not likely to be renewed again.[234]

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[229]The Times of 23 Jan. p. 9 leader, stated flatly "the conduct of the Nanking party and of their leader appears to be inexcusable." The North China Herald of 27 Jan. p. 214-5 claimed "Dr. Sun Yat-sen has betrayed the confidence that the world was inclined to repose in his ability to take a strong and statesmanlike line of action..."

[230]Jordan tel. F.O. 22 Jan. FO 371/1312

[231]Grey minutes, ibid.

[232]MacDonald to F.O. 28 Jan. (confidential) FO 371/1314. Langley commented, with a certain amount of satisfaction, "The Japanese found out that they had got their money on the wrong horse .."ibid.

[233]Jordan to F.O. 22 Jan (confidential) FO 371/1312

[234]Jordan to F. O. 27 Jan., ibid.

Sir John Jordan, trying to implement Britain's impartial stand, found himself the target of a wave of anti-British feeling in the capital. It was reported that several menacing letters were sent to him, probably from aggrieved Imperialists.[235] Yüan Shih-k'ai was again in despair and talked of resigning. The British reaction to this threat was probably as he expected; Jordan wired, "The situation is strained and may possibly become serious if ... Yüan resigns or leaves Peking ... "[236] Lindley proposed that "to reaffirm Yüan's position ... some joint action might be concerted on his behalf - otherwise the situation will be as bad as ever."[237] Even Walter Langley suggested, "This would perhaps take the form of a joint warning from the Powers to the Manchu princes of the risks they would run if they depart from the policy hitherto adopted on Yüan's advice"[238] (Abdication in return for favourable treatment). Yet on this occasion, because the talk of intervention was primarily to strengthen Yüan's hand, the Japanese were unwilling to commit themselves,[239] and Grey fell back again on a wait-and-see policy. "We had better wait till Sir John Jordan or the Japanese suggest moving. My personal feeling is still against moving: we know too little of the Chinese forces at work to be sure of our ground."[240]

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[235] North China Herald 3 Feb. p. 304, col. 1. Other Englishmen in Peking were also warned to leave their houses for fear of bomb threats. Ibid.

[236] Jordan tel. F.O. 23 Jan. FO 371/1311.

[237] Lindley minutes, ibid.

[238] Langley minutes, ibid.

[239] Jordan's tel. 23 Jan. ibid.

[240] Grey minutes, ibid.

Yüan Shih-k'ai thus continued to be the object of the British Government's watchfulness. On 16 January he barely escaped an assassination attempt in the streets of Peking, which incident he was able to utilize to dispel whatever distrust of him entertained by some members of the Manchu Court.[241] On 26 January the Empress Dowager decided to confer on Yüan the highest honour possible for a Chinese official, the title of Marquis. It was a clever move, obviously meant to impress the Chinese people that Yüan was actually working hand in glove with the Manchus. Yüan declined the honour three times before he finally accepted it.[242] But by this time whatever honours the Manchus chose to bestow ceased to have any significance as far as Yüan was concerned; he had already decided that capitulation to the republican demands was the only course to take, and was rapidly working for the final abdication of the Dynasty.

The Abdication

Early in January both Jordan and Yüan had recognized that the only stumbling block to a settlement was the continued presence of the Emperor and Court in Peking. The manner and consequences of the abdication now formed the main theme of the communications between Yüan and Sun.[243] On 13 January further indications of the general clamour for the abdication came with a telegram from the Committee of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, representing a body of foreign merchants, promising the former Prince Regent and Yüan that they would

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241 See J. Ch'en, Yüan Shih-k'ai, p. 125-6. Jordan's visit to him on 18 January was initially to congratulate him on his escape.

242 Jordan to F.O. 3 Feb. FO 371/1313, enclosing translations of Yüan's lengthy memorials detailing his reasons for declining the honour. See also Times 20 Feb. 1912.

243 See Jordan to Langley, 10 Jan. 1912 (private) FO 350/8 in which Jordan dismissed as amusing a suggestion then current in Peking that the foreign Chambers of Commerce should petition the Throne to abdicate in the interests of trade. It later turned out to have been the very expedient used by Yüan to force the hand of the Manchus.

work for a conciliatory spirit on the part of the revolutionaries if the Throne would abdicate.[244] It will be remembered that it had constantly been Jordan's personal view that "China is not suited, and will not for many years to come, be suited for constitutional government or a republic, and that it matters little what form of government is adopted provided she can obtain some capable men to govern the country."[245] Now at this stage in the negotiations, it was clear that both Chinese and foreigners realised that nothing but a republic would do, and Jordan conceded, "My own view is, as it has always been, that a republic is a very risky experiment, but I feel no alternative except a division of the country into a Northern monarchy and a Southern republic."[246]

Following the example of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, various other bodies of influential opinion, foreign and native, now began to campaign actively for the early abdication of the Throne. Aside from the official communications between Sun Yat-sen and Yüan Shih-k'ai, the revolutionaries also sent several delegates to Peking to talk with Yüan on the subject. A movement was further initiated to get all the Chinese Ministers serving abroad to telegraph petitions to the Throne urging abdication.[247] On 18 January a petition came in from the Hankow Cahmber of Commerce supporting the action of their Shanghai counter-part.[248] The Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce followed suit.[249] This last was somewhat

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[244]Jordan tel. F.O. 14 Jan. FO 371/1310. In a secret addendum Jordan noted that the action of the Chambers was clearly prompted by Yüan's party to bring pressure on the Throne.

[245]Jordan to F.O. 6 Jan. FO 371/1311.

[246]Jordan tel. F.O. 14 Jan. (confidential) FO 371/1310.

[247]See Jordan to F.O. 16 Jan. FO 371/1312.

[248]Jordan tel. F.O. 19 Jan. ibid. MaxMuller was resigned: "Nothing is surprising in China and apparently foreigners after a long residence there can act in as strange and unpredictable a manner as any Chinaman." ibid.

[249]Jordan tel. F.O. 28 Jan. ibid.

embarrassing for the British Government, as W. G. MaxMuller pointed out, "it is clearly most improper for the Chamber at Hong Kong to petition the Chinese Government in favour of the abdication of the Throne, when His Majesty's Government is trying to maintain an attitude of strict neutrality."[250]

If these endeavours were found insufficient to convince the Throne of the necessity of relinquishing its hold on the Chinese Empire, Yüan Shih-k'ai saw to it that a stronger reminder was in order. Early in February a remarkable memorial appeared in all the Peking newspapers. It was signed by forty-four generals and commanders, and the Throne was given to understand that it could no longer count on the support of the army in forcing upon the people a form of government to which they objected, so it had better make up its mind to accept the verdict of the country and declare itself for a republic.[251] It was evident to Jordan and others in Peking that the army had acted on the inspiration of Yüan. He had often made it seem that his hand was being forced by the army, but "all evidence goes to show the soldier has been as wax in the hands of the astute politician, whose masterly brain has been directing all the moves in this long drawn out game of Chinese statecraft ...."[252] The desertion of the army had the desired effect; Yüan was authorised to bargain with the Republicans the exact terms which would allow the Manchus and honourable retirement.[253]

One of Yüan's first predicaments when it came to implementing the abdication was the arrangements for a provisional government to exist right after the departure of the Manchus. He had two plans in mind: the South could send

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[250]MaxMuller minutes, ibid. Harcourt of the C.O. dismissed the action as "silly." His minutes, on F.O. to C.O. 6 Mar. 1912, CO 120/395.

[251]Memorandum enclosed in Jordan to F.O. 10 Feb. FO 371/1314.

[252]Jordan, ibid.

[253]Jordan tel. F.O. 1 Feb. FO 371/1312.

delegates to Peking, await the issue of the abdication decree, and then join with members of the Northern party to form a coalition government to take over directly, all this to be done in one day; or alternately they could allow the lapse of two days after the decree, during which Sun would resign, Yüan would be elected, and the coalition government established. As was his wont, Yüan wanted to know how much British support he could muster. On 8 February he sent two of his aides to see the British Minister. Jordan was asked if he could promise British backing for Yüan's first plan, which the Premier himself favoured, but which Sun would not accept. Yüan also desired to know if anything could be done by unofficial representations to Sun through the British Consul at Nanking, and if all else failed, and Yüan had to establish as a last resort his own provisional government in the North while negotiating for a coalition with the South, would Britain recognize such a government? Jordan made it clear to the two delegates that his own friendship and sympathy for Yüan notwithstanding, the British Government was committed to a policy of non-intervention, and could therefore, not give Yüan any of the official or unofficial assurances he desired.[254]

In the meantime, Yüan had succeeded in persuading the Dynasty that it was wiser to retire peacefully than wait until it was forced to go.[255] On 12 February the Manchu abdication decree was proclaimed. Jordan commented, "As the last act of a dynasty which had ruled China for two hundred and sixty seven years, and whose earlier Emperors had raised the country to a state of

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[254]Jordan to F.O. 10 Feb. FO 371/1314.

[255]Rumours were circulated in Peking that the revolutionary forces were coming North by sea, and that a landing could be expected any day at Chefoo, or Ching-wan-tao. See Jordan tel. F.O. 16 Jan. (confidential) FO 371/1312.

prosperity and greatness it had never before attained, this valedictory edict is one of some historical interest ..."[256] On the same day Yüan telegraphed to Nanking his acceptance of a Republic, and the following day, 13 February, Sun Yat-sen tendered his resignation to the Nanking Assembly.[257] On 14 February Yüan Shih-k'ai was elected by the Assembly as Provisional President in succession to Sun.[258] Jordan and B. Alston visited Yüan soon after, to offer him their congratulations. They found the new President-elect in an optimistic mood, and Yüan hastened to express his warm gratitude for all the sympathy and support he had received from Great Britain, and "looked forward to the closest relations in the future ..."[259]

Unfortunately the removal of the Manchu Dynasty and the proclamation of a Republic did not mean the immediate restoration of good relations between Yüan Shih-k'ai and the South. For one thing the very nature of the establishment of the Republic came under attack from the Nanking revolutionaries. Sun telegraphed to Yüan that a republican government could not be formed under the mandate of

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[256]Jordan's comment, to F.O. 13 Feb. FO 371/1314. The Decree is given in "Nan-pei i-ho" in HHKM VIII, 183-5, in translation in Jordan's despatch. To the Foreign Office, the most striking feature of the decree was its lack of historical precedent. The minutes on Jordan's tel. of 11 Feb. (secret) FO 371/1312, pointed out: "An abdicating dynasty in this instance replaces itself by a republic by its own decree. I doubt if recent history records a similar precedent ... " The significance of the events, however, seemed to have escaped those who should have been most concerned. Jordan reported that "Peking has received the edict with marked indifference and the people follow their ordinary pursuits unmoved by the political changes ... the citizens of the latest and largest republic in the world cannot yet grasp the fact that government is possible without an Emperor ... " Jordan to F.O. 13 Feb. FO 371/1314. His sentiments were echoed by the Times of the same day, "Some of us who know China best cannot but doubt whether a form of government so utterly alien to Oriental conceptions and to Oriental traditions as a republic can be suddenly substituted for a monarchy in a nation of 100 million men ...." Times 13 Feb., p. 9, leader. See also London and China Express 16 Feb. p. 125, col. 2 for further comments along the same lines.

[257]The North China Herald called it "the supreme test of republican good faith." 17 Feb. p. 409, 10, leader, and the Times paid tribute to Sun's "self-restraint" 27 Feb. 1912, p. 5.

[258]Wilkinson tel. Jordan, Jordan tel. F.O. 16 Feb. FO 371/1312.

[259]Jordan to Langley, 17 Feb. (private) FO 350/8.

the Manchu Emperor, and he should therefore come immediately to Nanking to take office. The seat of the provisional government should also be at Nanking. A delegation headed by T'ang Shao-i was on its way to Peking to persuade Yüan to go South as soon as possible.[260] Another month was to elapse before Yüan wore down the opposition of the South and induced the Nanking government to agree to his inauguration at Peking.[261]

While the location of Yüan's inaugural ceremonies mattered little to the British Government, the question of a possible transfer of the capital from Peking was a different story. This time the Foreign Office stood solidly behind Yüan's reluctance to move. When it was first learned that Sun insisted on Nanking being the capital, Langley warned that "if eventually the Chinese wish to make a permanent transfer of the capital, the Powers will have a good deal to say in the matter."[262] The British were ready to back their arguments with treaty stipulations, in which Peking had always been designated the capital, and the location and frontiers of the legation quarters had been clearly defined in Peking. There was also the enormous expenses involved in moving the legation staff out of Peking.[263] British merchant opinion in the South, however, jumped at the opportunity of having the Chinese capital installed in the very centre of commercial activity in Nanking. The Shanghai branch of the China Association telegraphed to London:[264]

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[260]Jordan tel. F.O. 14 Feb. FO 371/1312.

[261]Yüan indicated to Jordan that he had no personal objection to agreeing with their proposal, if he thought he could leave Peking with safety. But he pointed out that there were some twenty-five thousand Manchu troops in the capital, and his departure would be a signal for conflict between them and the Chinese troops, over whom he alone could exercise proper control. He convinced Jordan that his departure was impracticable in the circumstances. See Jordan to Langley, 17 Feb. (private) FO 350/8. J. Chen, op.cit. 136-7 gives some more of Yüan's reasons for remaining in Peking.

[262]Langley minutes on Jordan tel. F.O. 16 Feb., FO 371/1312.

[263]MaxMuller memorandum, 19 Feb., FO 371/1313.

[264]China Association, Shanghai Branch, tel. London Headquarters, 28 Feb. 1912, in China Association to F.O. 5 Mar. FO 371/1314.

> "From the standpoint of British interests and trade there can be no question if reformed government instituted at Nanking it will be incalculable advantage. Central as regards Canton, Tientsin, Chentu - magnificently served by Yangtze - cities convenient of access of water, rail to sea, all parts of country. Nanking also centre of former British spher e of influence, and part of country where British trade far outweighs that of other nations ... It appears of first importance such official influence as we possess should be used, towards bringing about change ...."

Even the British Consul at Nanking felt that the republicans were not "without justification."[265]

The Foreign Office, though conceding that the mercantile community had some strong reasons in favour of a transfer of the Chinese capital, nevertheless suspected that, as during the abdication talks, the Shanghai and Nanking residents might have been inspired to move by such revolutionary leaders as Wu T'ing-fang, in order to bring pressure to bear on Yüan Shih-k'ai.[266] Jordan's opinion was referred to. By then Yüan had concrete proof of the inadvisability of his departure from Peking.[267] His views prevailed.[268]

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[265] Wilkinson tel. Jordan 16 Feb., in Jordan tel. F.O. 24 Feb., FO 371/1315.

[266] MaxMuller minutes, ibid.

[267] On 29 February, the troops in Peking mutinied, looted and burned a large part of the Chinese and Manchu cities. The republican delegates, headed by T'ang Shao-i, in town to persuade Yüan to go South, were the first to be singled out for attack, and in many cases had to make ignominious escapes to the Legations quarters. Similar disturbances broke out also in Tientsin and other cities. It has often been suggested that the whole affair was staged by Yüan to influence the Southern delegates. See J. Ch'en, op.cit. 137-8; C. Pearl, op.cit. 244-8, in which Morrison tried to vindicate charges that Yüan engineered the plot. "Could anything conceivably be more preposterous than the suggestion that Y.S.K. inspired the mutiny in Peking in order to prevent his going to Nanking? ... no man ever seriously believed that he could leave Peking at this time, and for him to have brought about the mutiny and shattered his reputation throughout the world seems to be as unreasonable as to employ a steelhammer to crush a gooseberry..."

[268] Jordan tel. F.O. 28 Feb. FO 371/1313.

On 10 March 1912, Yüan Shih-k'ai was inaugurated as the second Provisional President of the Chinese Republic in Peking. Following Jordan's advice, the Diplomatic Corps was not invited to attend the ceremonies, which "might cause embarrassment," and Yüan confined himself to a mere notification of the ceremony.[269] On 1 April Sun Yat-sen formally laid down the seals of office.

Paradoxically, as revealed in foreign opinion at least, Sun Yat-sen seemed to have achieved the greatest success of his long revolutionary career not in his energetic efforts plotting against the Manchu Dynasty, not even when he established the provisional Nanking government, but in his final departure from the Chinese political scene. Whereas he had no lack of foreign critics belittling his career before 1912,[270] - the term "visionary" was the most frequently used epithet - his resignation of the Presidency in favour of Yüan was hailed as the supreme political sacrifice, a magnanimous gesture worthy of the finest in the Chinese tradition. The London Times declared that "he has displayed conspicuous gifts of statesmanship, he retires into privacy widely respected as a man and a patriot."[271] The North China Herald in an editorial also commented, "it is impossible to read his farewell speech unmoved by the

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[269] Jordan to F.O. 11 Mar. FO 371/1314.

[270] G. Morrison wrote in his diary that Tsai Ting-kan, an emissary of Yüan to the negotiations, had found little respect for Sun as a leader in the Wuhan revolutionary camp. "The revolutionaries whom Tsai met spoke with some contempt of a man who had been only a dreamer of the revolution, always keeping away in order to save his own skin." C. Pearl, op.cit. 231. Morrison, of course, had always been a staunch supporter and personal friend of Yüan's.

[271] Times 2 Apr. 1912, p. 5 col.1.

evident sincerity of his faith in a noble ideal. More than this Dr. Sun stands out conspicuously for an absolutely disinterested conduct throughout. The pledges that he gave he has performed, and having seen the inauguration of the Republic he retires from office to labour on its behalf in a field that gives best play to his genius."[272]

Sun Yat-sen, Yüan Shih-k'ai and Sir John Jordan played the three key roles in the final drama of the Chinese revolutionary movement. Sun was the original architect of the Revolution, Yüan brought it to fruition, and Jordan was the British observer on the scene who protected and upheld British interests in China while at the same time exerting considerable influence over the turn of events which brought down over two hundred and fifty years of Manchu rule in China and replaced it by a modern republic. Sometimes deliberately, though more often unwittingly involved, British policy in China had to do with every stage of the Chinese revolutionary movement throughout 1895-1912.

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[272] North China Herald 6 Apr. 1912, p. 1 col. 1-3, leading article.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

It can be said that there was no policy as such with which Great Britain reacted to the Chinese revolutionary movement of 1895-1912. But there were certain principles and aims which characterised British relations with China during this period. For one thing, it is clear that there was a good deal of sympathy from British opinion in and out of China for the Chinese movement for liberty and reform. This sentiment was shared among the diplomats, the government officials as well as the public, especially those who had made the personal acquaintance of Sun Yat-sen or K'ang Yu-wei. The feeling was widespread that any changes in China had to be an improvement on the attitudes and administration of the Manchus. Coupled with this was the instinctive sympathy for the underdog which has been frequently identified with British foreign policy throughout history. There were marked manifestations of this during the years of revolutionary struggle, when the T'ung Meng Hui suffered atrocities of reprisal at the hands of the Imperial troops. Missionary zeal for the cause of reform in China was of course the clearest case of British support. The fact of Sun Yat-sen being a Christian and many of the other student revolutionaries being products of missionary education goes far to explain the British missionary's interest in China at this time. Unfortunately the missionaries were often too close to the men and motives implicated to be of practical value in the formulation of policies from London: their reactions were usually based on vague sentiment rather than on the vital issues involved.

Self-interest or self-preservation, however, were more realistic motives to be attributed to Britain's general interest in the Chinese revolutionary movement, more than any high-sounding sentiments in favour of liberalisation or democracy. To obtain improved conditions of trade and commerce, Britain had every desire to see a new and enlightened administration in Peking. On the other hand, the activities of the revolutionaries, the potential new rulers, spelled chaos and disruption in those key areas where British traders were concentrated. Hence Britain's difficulty in proclaiming any definite policy towards the revolutionaries during this period. For the sake of expediency, all pointed to the wisdom of supporting the strong man Yüan Shih-k'ai, the only person capable of centralizing authority and preventing the tendencies towards provincial autonomy once the Revolution had broken out. Since Yüan was in the eyes of all China identified with the Manchu Government and Peking, British support for him must be rendered in such a manner so as not to alienate at the same time the revolutionaries in the South and Central provinces, where British merchants still harboured memories of the 1905 boycott against American goods. Thus Sir Edward Grey declared British neutrality in the Chinese Revolution, while simultaneously urging Sir John Jordan and the Yangtze Consuls to give whatever unofficial support was necessary to enable Yüan to arrive at a speedy settlement with the revolutionaries. British policy was therefore an erratic line, determined from day to day by the opinion of vested interests, by sentimental considerations, or by the force of circumstances.

In the early days of the revolutionary movement, Lord Salisbury's handling of Sun Yat-sen's kidnap in London was fairly typical of the vacillating nature of British policy. It was clear to the Foreign Office that Sun was the

chief engineer of an uprising in Canton in 1895, and that he was banished from Hong Kong for this. When it was known that the Chinese Legation had captured their culprit in London and abused their diplomatic privileges in doing so, Salisbury still hesitated to take any action, despite strong pressure from Bertie and Campbell in the Far Eastern Department. It was only when Sir James Cantlie threatened to expose the whole story in the press that Salisbury was jolted into the decision to demand Sun's release, and subsequently to send a watered-down note of protest to the Chinese Legation. His rescue of Sun embarrassed the Hong Kong Government, of course, who failed to see why the Colonial Office sanctioned his expulsion from Hong Kong for his political views, only to have him protected again on British soil in England. On the other hand, the episode infinitely advanced Sun's revolutionary career, and the British public was the first to which Sun turned whenever he required sympathy or publicity.

When K'ang Yu-wei began his reform activities in Peking, many Britons were genuinely interested in the outcome of the movement, especially when the Emperor himself was involved. But the coup d'etat dashed all hopes of reform from above in China, and once again Britain took part in the rescue of the chief character in the drama. The decision to protect K'ang from the agents sent after his head by the Empress Dowager characteristically did not come originally from London: the personal respect for K'ang and his ideas on the part of Timothy Richard in Peking, the Acting British Consul Brenan in Shanghai and Sir Henry Blake in Hong Kong resulted in his being assured of British sanctuary wherever he subsequently travelled. British action was criticised by the other Powers as being interference in Chinese internal affairs. But there was little policy guidance from Lord Salisbury, and the

Foreign Office merely followed the lead of its representatives in the Far East.

Sir Henry Blake, Governor of Hong Kong, in many ways was an important influence on the Chinese revolutionary movement. His great sympathy for the local revolutionaries and their cause, and his unconcealed disgust at the methods employed by the Peking Government, such as the murder in British territory of known rebels by hired assassins, probably made him, unofficially at least, the finest foreign friend the Chinese revolutionaries had in the early days of their movement. In 1900, the year of great confusion in China, with the Boxers in the North, two revolutionary groups operating in the South, the reformers, revolutionaries and their Japanese sympathisers agitating in the Central provinces, Blake sought to promote peace and stability in at least a portion of the Empire by attempting to bring together Sun Yat-sen and Viceroy Li Hung-chang in a common scheme to liberate the South from Manchu rule. It was an unrealistic plan, to say the least, but London was so concerned with and perplexed by the Chinese situation in that year that the Foreign Office was on the verge of sanctioning Blake's suggestions.

After 1900 the Chinese revolutionaries turned away from their sole reliance on the secret societies in the South. The movement began to include among its ranks more of the students in the Yangtze Provinces, and thus came in direct contact with many British traders who were resident in the treaty ports. Shanghai became the headquarters of student activities where they enjoyed relative freedom from persecution for their seditious attitudes. The foreign merchants would have been expected to view with disfavour the anarchical policies of the students, but they valued their

independence and autonomy even more. These circumstances thus produced the surprising outcome in the Su-pao case, where the Shanghai Municipality insisted on protecting the Chinese journalists from capture by the Chinese Government. This was not because the British-dominated Municipal Council agreed with the radical views of the writers, but because it would not surrender its freedom of action in all matters concerning the Shanghai Settlement and bow to the requests from both the Diplomatic Corp in Peking and the Chinese Government to hand over the prisoners. The liberal treatment of the Su-pao writers served only to encourage the revolutionaries, and enhanced the value, in their eyes, of Shanghai as a base of operations.

Chinese radicals in Shanghai took the lead again in 1905 in organizing the first outward manifestation of Chinese national unity, the boycott against American goods in retaliation for the United States' discrimination against Chinese immigrants. The movement proved awkward for Britain: despite the obvious advantages to be gained from helping the Chinese Government suppress the boycott in British territories, Sir Ernest Satow was diffident, fearing an extension of the boycott to British goods; on the other hand, endorsing the movement would probably increase the trade for British merchants, though it would surely antagonise the United States. After much soul-searching Britain decided to assume a detached attitude and let the movement work itself out. The lesson of the American experiences was not lost, however, and in the future policies towards the Chinese revolutionary movement would have to take into consideration this new national consciousness among the Chinese radicals.

1905 was a milestone in modern Chinese history: the Manchu Government decided to initiate far-reaching constitutional reforms to

placate the agitation in the country, while the revolutionaries organized themselves in the T'ung Meng Hui and began a programme of vigorous rebellions against the government. The government's attempt to take the lead in a modernization campaign was generally applauded by British observers in China, although from the first there was scepticism whether the Chinese were ready for the sort of constitutional government that was envisaged. Meanwhile attention was drawn to the numerous uprisings staged by the T'ung Meng Hui against the provincial government in several areas. Britain's foremost concern was for the safety of the lives and property of its citizens in China. Sir John Jordan was able at first to assure the Foreign Office that the Chinese government seemed capable and determined to suppress these rebellions. In time, however, it was soon known that many regiments of the Imperial troops were themselves sympathetic to the revolutionary ideology, and that they often proved unreliable in action against the rebels. The cruel treatment of captured rebels by the troops also served to influence British public opinion against the questionable ethics of the Government.

The Regency, heralded with such optimism and good-will, was fast proving a disappointment. As far as Britain was concerned, the single act which stamped the Regent as a reactionary instead of a progressive, as was generally anticipated, was his dismissal of Yüan Shih-k'ai from office in 1909. Britain's relations with Yüan had always been cordial, especially after Jordan's arrival in Peking in 1906. Yüan's reforming zeal was acknowledged in all the areas in which he served, and his handling of the Boxer situation in Shantung was widely respected. He has always been regarded as the one stabilizing influence in Peking, and his removal

indicated, to Britain at least, the beginning of the real decline in the prestige of the Ch'ing Government. It was not until after the outbreak of the Revolution in October, 1911, that the Regent, in desperation, recalled Yüan to Peking.

The suddenness and rapid progress of the Revolution when it came was a surprise to the Chinese Government as well as to the foreign Powers. For lack of any guidance with which to deal with the new situation, Grey indicated from the beginning that Britain would observe neutrality and await developments. Only later, when Yüan was in a position of influence in Peking, did Grey come round to Jordan's suggestion that Britain should back Yüan as the only stable factor in the circumstances. From then on, while officially standing clear of Chinese internal politics, Jordan was working behind the scenes in Peking by his personal influence with Yüan, to bring about first an armistice and subsequently peace talks with the republicans from the South.

There were several problems which complicated British policy-making. The first obstacle to peace in China was the difficulty of deciding upon a form of government for the new China. The South insisted on a republic, which neither Yüan nor Jordan felt the Chinese were ready for. The question was how to convince the revolutionaries that there were other alternatives, and here it is clear that in 1911-12 Britain had no real influence in the South or among the republican ranks comparable to that which Jordan had over Yüan in the North. Another problem was that of finance: if Yüan was to be supported, he must have means with which to run the government; yet supplying him would evoke the antagonism of the Southern faction, in whose territories resided most of the British subjects in China. Even Jordan wavered in his thinking on this; though he finally

decided that Britain had better not finance either side in the struggle, he had already lost credit with the revolutionaries for having broached the idea of lending money to Yüan in the first place.

By December 1911 Britain appeared to have achieved at least her limited objectives for this stage in the Revolution: a truce had been signed and was renewable; negotiations had begun between North and South, thanks to the mediation of the British Consul at Hankow; and the Regent had abdicated. But a settlement was not yet in the making. The South would accept nothing short of the retirement of the Manchu Dynasty and the establishment of a republican form of government. The Japanese, Britain's allies in the Far East, would not like to see a republic as her neighbour and were intent on provoking incidents which would call for foreign intervention. Meanwhile Yüan, seeing that his proposal of a limited monarchy under Manchu sovereignty was not acceptable to the South, was already calculating the steps by which his "conversion" to republicanism would take, which would ultimately leave him the strongest single factor in the state. He tried dubious means to test Southern and British reactions before allowing his representative in the negotiations to declare for a republic. Then Sun Yat-sen arrived back in China and in January 1912 formed a rival republican government in Nanking. Yüan saw that despite his open disavowal of Sun's recalcitrant attitude at the peace conferences, Jordan was adverse to the development of a civil war situation in China, with a monarchical North and republican South. With that, it was easy for Yüan to claim majority opinion in the country and consent to accept the presidency of the republic.

Yüan Shih-k'ai's actions and motives from December 1911 to March 1912,

when he was inaugurated as Provisional President of the Chinese Republic, were often a puzzle even to Sir John Jordan. It is clear that Yüan played on the fears and weaknesses of Britain when faced with the revolutionary situation in China, and was able to secure a settlement which served his own interests best without at the same time upsetting Britain's interests in China. Yüan had nothing to lose by allowing Jordan to arrange the armistice and negotiations -- the cities were falling and he had no money in the government coffers -- so he readily went along with the British plans. But it must have been obvious to him then that the South would never relinquish the main objective of the Revolution, the removal of the Manchus, and accept the British proposal of a constitutional government under nominal Manchu sovereignty. It is ironical that after a decade of sympathy and moral support for the Chinese movements for reform and revolution, Britain should at the last stage repudiate the very objective of the Chinese revolutionaries and then to have the fruits of the Revolution go to Yüan Shih-k'ai, who in 1898 had helped to suppress the Hundred Days' Reform Movement. Britain ended up by alienating the radicals in the South and supporting Peking, thus laying the foundations of the anti-British outbursts in the following decade.

GLOSSARY

Ai-kuo Hsüeh-she 愛國學社
Chang Chih-tung 張之洞
Chang Cho-t'ing 張佐庭
Chang Hsiao-ch'ien 張孝謙
Chang Ming-ch'i 張鳴岐
Chang Pao-ch'ing 張寶卿
Chang Ping-lin 章炳麟
Chang Shih-chao 章士釗
Chang Te-yi 張德彝
Chang Yin-huan 張蔭桓
Chang Yung-fu 張永福
Chao Sheng 趙聲
Ch'en Ching-yüeh 陳敬岳
Ch'en Chu-nan 陳楚楠
Chen-nan-kuan 鎮南關
Ch'en Shao-pai 陳少白
Ch'en T'ien-hua 陳天華
Ch'en T'ing wai 陳廷威
Cheng Kuan-kung 鄭貫公
Cheng Shih-liang 鄭士良
Ch'i-nu-hu 乂女湖
Ch'iang-hsüeh Hui 強學會
Chih-na An-sha T'uan 支那暗殺團
Ch'in-chow 欽州
chin-shih 進士
(Prince) Ch'ing, I-k'uang 慶親王, 奕劻
Chiu Chin 秋瑾
Chou Lu 鄒魯
Chu Ch'i 朱淇
Chu Chia-pao 朱家寶
Chu Chih-hsin 朱執信
Chu Ho-chung 朱和中
Chu Hsiang 朱湘
chu-jen 舉人
Chü-O I-yung Tui 拒俄義勇隊
(Prince) Ch'un, I-huan 醇親王, 奕譞
Chün-kuo-min Chiao-yü Hui 軍國民教育會
Chung-kuo Kung-hsüeh 中國公學
chung-yang 重陽
En-ming 恩銘
En-shou 恩壽
Erh-shih Shih-chi chih Chih-na 二十世紀之支那
Fang-ch'eng 防城
Feng Chin-ju 馮鏡如
Feng Hsia-wei 馮夏威

Feng-shan 鳳山
Feng Tzu-yu 馮自由
Fu-ch'i 孚琦
Fu-jen Wen-she 輔仁文社
Hanlin Society 翰林院
Ho Ch'ang-ch'ing 何長清
Ho Ch'i 何啓
Ho-k'ou 河口
Ho Tzu-ts'ai 賀子才
Hsieh Tsuan-t'ai 謝纘泰
Hsing Chung Hui 興中會
Hsiung Ch'eng-chi 熊成基
Hsü Chih-ching 徐致靖
Hsü Chin 徐勤
Hsü Hsi-lin 徐錫麟
Hsü Hsüeh-ch'iu 許雪秋
hsüeh-t'ang 學堂
Hu Han-min 胡漢民
hua-ch'iao 華僑
Hua Hsing Hui 華興會
Huang Fu 黃福
Huang Fu-sheng 黃復生
Huang Hsing 黃興
Huang-k'ang 黃岡
Huang Yung-shang 黃詠商
Hung Ch'üan-fu 洪全福
I Ying-t'ien 倪映典
Jih Chih Hui 日知會
Jung Hung 容閎
Jung-lu 榮祿
K'ang Kuang-jen 康廣仁
K'ang Yu-wei 康有為
Ko-lao Hui 哥老會
Kuang-hsü, Tsai-t'ien 光緒, 載湉
Kuang-tung Tu-li Hsieh-hui 廣東獨立協會
Kung Chao-yüan 龔照瑗
(Prince) Kung, I-hsin 恭親王, 奕訢
Kuo Jen-chang 郭人漳
Kuo-min Jih-jih Pao 國民日報
Kuo-wen Pao 國聞報
Li Ch'i-t'ang 李紀堂
Li Chia-cho 李家焯
Li Chun 李準
Li Hung-chang 李鴻章
Li-ling 醴陵
Li Tzu-chung 李自重
Li Yüan-hung 黎元洪
Liang Ch'i-ch'ao 梁啓超
Lien-chow 廉州
Lin I-shun 林義順

Lin Kuan-tz'u 林冠慈
Liu K'un-i 劉坤一
Liu Hsüeh-hsün 劉學詢
Liu Ssu-fu 劉師復
Liu Tao-i 劉道一
Liu-yang 瀏陽
Liu Yü-lin 劉玉麟
Lo Feng-lu 羅豐祿
Lu Hao-tung 陸皓東
Ma Fu-i 馬福益
Meng-hui T'ou 猛回頭
Min Pao 民報
Na-t'ung 那桐
Nan-fang Chih-pu 南方支部
Nan-yang Kung-hsüeh 南洋公學
Nieh Shih-ch'eng 聶士成
Pao-kuo Hui 保國會
Pao-huang Tang 保皇黨
P'i Yung-nien 畢永年
P'ing-hsiang 萍鄉
San Tien Hui 三點會
Shen Chin 沈藎
Sheng Hsüan-huai 盛宣懷
Shih Chien-ju 史堅如
Shih-wu Hsüeh-t'ang 時務學堂
Shih-wu Pao 時務報
Ssu-ch'uan Pao-lu T'ung-chih Hui 四川保路同志會
Su-pao 蘇報
Sun Chia-nai 孫家鼐
Sun Su-fang 孫叔方
Sun Yat-sen 孫逸仙
Ta-kung Pao 大公報
ta-tung 大同
T'ai-p'ing Shun-t'ien Kuo 太平順天國
T'an Chung-lin 譚鍾麟
T'ang Shao-i 唐紹儀
T'ang Ts'ai-ch'ang 唐才常
tao-tai 道台
Te-shou 德壽
Teng Ch'in-ch'i 鄧琴齊
Teng Tzu-yü 鄧子瑜
Teng Yin-nan 鄧蔭南
Tieh-liang 鐵良
Ts'ai Chün 蔡鈞
Ts'en Ch'un-hsüan 岑春煊
Tsou Jung 鄒容
Tsungli-yamen 總理衙門
T'ung-ch'ou Pu 統籌部
T'ung Meng Hui 同盟會
Tung Wen Kuan 同文館

Tzu Cheng Yüan 資政院
Tz'u-hsi,Hsiao-ch'in 慈禧,孝欽
Tzu I Chü 諮議局
Tzu-li Hui 自立會
Wai-wu Pu 外務部
Wan Fu-hua 萬福華
Wan Shou-kung 萬壽宮
Wan Yen Shu 萬言書
Wang Chih-ch'un 王之春
Wang Ching-wei 汪精衛
Wang I 王易
Wei Kuang-t'ao 魏光燾
Wen Sheng-ts'ai 溫才財
Wen T'ing-shih 文廷式
Weng T'ung-ho 翁同龢
Wu Chih-hui 吳稚暉
Wu Lao-san 伍勞三
Wu Liu 吳六
Wu T'ing-fang 伍廷芳
Wu Yüeh 吳越
Yang Ch'ing-ch'i 楊清啓
Yang Ch'ü-yün 楊衢雲
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Yang Ho-lin 楊鶴齡
Yang Jui 楊銳
Yang Shen-hsiu 楊深秀
Yao Yü-p'ing 姚雨平
Yen Fu 嚴復
Ying Lien-chih 英斂之
Yü Chi-ch'eng 余既成
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